**■ Business / B1**

San Miguel investing $45M in China

**■ Sports / A25**

Celeste rules Tour Pilipinas 1st stage

**■ World / A10**

Bush reverses US policy on Middle East

**■ Metro / A23**

Parañaque judge annuls Alma-Joey marriage

**Tanong ng Bayan / A9**

Pagkatapos ni Roco, susunod na ba si Ping?

SAGOT NINA GILBERT REMULLA AT IBA PA

## PCSO chief in critical condition following stroke

**By Vincent Cabreza**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—She complained of a headache and then blacked out.

Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office Chair Ma. Livia "Honey Girl" Singson-de Leon went under the knife for a ruptured aneurysm

PCSO CHIEF/ A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

## Comelec in no hurry to place Gil back on list

**By Martin P. Marfil**

THE COMMISSION on Elections is not inclined to restore the name of Eddie Gil to the official list of presidential candidates until it clarifies for itself what the Supreme Court meant by the "status quo" order on Gil's disqualification case.

COMELEC/ A8

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Friday, April 16, 2004 ★★ 76 pages / 9 sections / vol. 19 / no. 128 P18 website: www.inq7.net

# GMA orders Iraq exit plan

## *Troops restricted to camp, deployment of new forces stopped*

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño**

**A CONTINGENCY plan for the evacuation of Filipinos from troubled Iraq has been ordered drawn up by President Macapagal-Arroyo in view of the deteriorating security situation there.**

A statement issued by Malacañang early yesterday said the President had also ordered that Filipino peacekeeping troops be restricted to their camp and assigned instead to the Philippine Embassy, and that the deployment of new humanitarian forces to the Middle East country be stopped.

But Sen. Manuel Villar warned that it would be politically riskier for the President to allow Filipino troops to remain in Iraq given the intensified attacks there against US and allied forces.

Villar, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, told reporters that some of Ms Macapagal's people might be advising her against pulling out the troops because she could stand to lose US support with the presidential election just three weeks away.

Justifying the softening of her all-out support for the US-led coalition forces in Iraq, Ms Macapagal said protecting Filipino nationals "presents certain unique challenges."

She said she had directed Ambassador Roy Cimatu and officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs to set up an Iraq Team for the relocation or evacuation of Filipinos.

"The Iraq Team is also tasked to identify and locate all our nationals and establish working relationships with appropriate

GMA/ A8

**HAVE 75-year-old seaplane, will fly around the world in 8 1/2 months to celebrate 100 years of aviation, promote the Philippines as a world-class tourist destination and raise funds for the United Nations Children's Fund. That is the dream of Capt. Iren Dornier (right) greeted here by a welcoming party after planing in from Clark and landing on Manila Bay on Thursday to start his voyage.**

ERIK ARAZAS

## *Between sea and air is a Flight for Dreams*

**By Blanche S. Rivera**

"IT IS the sea and it is the air, and there is a dream in between. That is what we are going for."

With these words, German pilot Iren Dornier, owner of Southeast Asian Airlines (SEAIR) based in Clark, Angeles, Pampanga, and his five-member crew took off in a restored seaplane yesterday, commencing a tour of 60 countries to promote the Philippines as a tourist destination and raise funds for the education of Filipino children.

After a final check early in the morning on Manila Bay, the 75-year-old Do–24ATT, looking brand new, was off for Bangkok, Thailand, on the first leg of its eight-month journey. It will be back on Christmas Day.

The team will donate to the United Nations Children's Fund any excess in donations that it will receive to complete the tour.

Unicef is also collecting pledges for every mile that the Do-24ATT will fly (interested parties may call 750-1000 for pledges). Its goal is

BETWEEN/ A8

## Do not belittle me, FPJ tells GMA

**By Carlito Pablo**

SAN FERNANDO, La Union—Actor and high school dropout Fernando Poe Jr. has offered some advice to US-trained economist President Macapagal-Arroyo. ***(Related story on Page A3.)***

"*Huwag nilang minamaliit ang ibang tao* (They shouldn't belittle other persons)," Poe said in a brief interview with reporters on Wednesday.

Poe was commenting on Ms Macapagal's statement that the country shouldn't cast its lot with an inexperienced actor, who relies mainly on advisers.

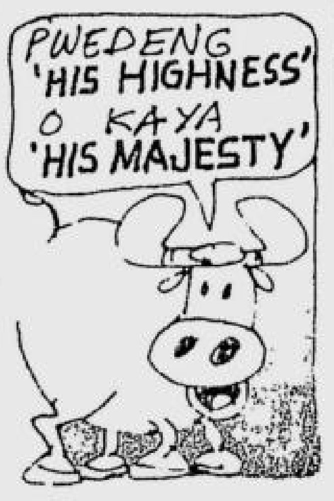
"*Nagkakamali sila* (They are mistaken)," Poe said.

He reminded Ms Macapagal that she had two movie actors running for Senate seats in her K-4 coalition, referring to Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid and Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., erstwhile chair of the Videogram Regulatory Board.

"*Sana huwag naman (silang) pabayaan* (I hope they won't be sidelined)," Poe said.

Poe returned to the campaign trail on Tuesday, covering Northern and Central Luzon up to Friday before proceeding to Laguna and Cavite on Saturday and Sunday.

DO NOT/ A12



PWEDENG 'HIS HIGHNESS' O KAYA 'HIS MAJESTY'

## *Susan: Stop calling him 'Da King'*

**By Raj Padilla**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—Fernando Poe Jr. no longer wants to be called "Da King," a reference to his being the king of Philippine movies.

Actress Susan Roces said yesterday her husband did not want the people to get the idea that he would act like a king when he got to Malacañang.

"He always specifies 'be of service, not rule.' Much as he is lovingly called Da King, he doesn't want to create that impression (of being one)," said Roces,

SUSAN/ A12

## Roco men: We do not call rivals, they call us

**By TJ Burgonio**

ALYANSA ng Pag-Asa candidates yesterday scrambled to debunk reports that some of them were considering defecting to the camp of President Macapagal-Arroyo or of Sen. Panfilo Lacson following standard-bearer Raul Roco's departure for the United States.

Roco's running mate Herminio Aquino said that contrary to reports, the Alyansa candidates were sticking with one another and remained "steadfast in our crusade for change."

"We have not abandoned, and we will not abandon, the millions of Filipinos who are clamoring for a clean and honest government. We will not forsake our dreams; we will not walk away from our fight," he said, reading from a prepared speech.

Aquino denied Lacson's claim that some Alyansa candidates had called up Lacson's political officer, Armand Padilla, after Roco announced on Tuesday that he would be seeking medical treatment in the United States for his chronic back pain.

"If indeed [Lacson] claims that, I hope he tells us who these people are because I don't think so. He could be bluffing again," Aquino said.

The Alyansa's seven senatorial candidates also issued denials.

Melanio "Batas" Mauricio said in a press briefing that it was "people from the camp of Lacson and from the administration" who called him as early as last Saturday, or three days before Roco announced his decision to seek treatment abroad.

"They're the ones making moves to undermine us. We're not the ones calling them," Mauricio said.

Former Solicitor General Frank

ROCO/ A17

ROCO FIGHT
ROCO FIGHT
ROCO

**THE SON also rises: Rex Roco, the fifth of Raul Roco's six children, meets the press in Pasig City where he joined his father's Senate ticket led by vice presidential bet Hermie Aquino (left).**

## 11 Poe media staffers quit, new convenor named

**By Christine O. Avendaño and Carlito Pablo**

WITH THE election campaign set to end in three weeks, 11 members of the media bureau of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino resigned yesterday.

Among those who quit were Benjie Guevarra, Brian Yamsuan, Roan Pagkalinawan, Merlinda Manalo, Peter Singh and Dave Pahilga.

"I regret losing them," KNP media bureau head Rod Reyes said yesterday. "The group has been working very hard for FPJ and they have been with me since the presidential campaign of Joseph Estrada," he said.

Guevara is a former staffer of Sen. Edgardo Angara; Yamsuan is a former chief of staff of Sen. Tessie Oreta and OIC of Malacañang's Media Accreditation Relations Office; Pagkalinawan, a former staffer of Oreta; Manalo, a former reporter of Manila Standard; Singh, former head of the Senate Public Information and Media Relations Office, and Pahilga, also a former staffer of Oreta.

Asked why they resigned so close to the end of the campaign, Reyes said his former staff members had found "better opportunities elsewhere."

He said that the 11 had no complaints and that they were handling a new client. "Of course, there may be other reasons."

The resignations came before the camp of actor Fernando Poe Jr. announced the designation of his personal chief of staff, a former member of the theater group UP Repertory, as the media chief of his presidential campaign.

Poe designated Susan Tagle "overall convenor" of the Poe "communications group" that will handle all media-related groups operating under the KNP.

Tagle is a former student activist from the University of the Philippines in Baguio City and has been Poe's trusted aide over the past 20 years.

Tagle's group will coordinate

11 POE/ A12

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**WEATHER FORECAST**

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds blowing from the northeast and east will prevail over Northern Luzon becoming light to moderate winds blowing from the west and northwest over the rest of the country.

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/16/04 SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Manila | Partly Cloudy | Iloilo/Bacolod | Partly Cloudy |
| Baguio | Partly Cloudy | Roxas | Partly Cloudy |
| Tuguegarao | Partly Cloudy | Cebu | Partly Cloudy |
| Laoag | Partly Cloudy | Tacloban | Partly Cloudy |
| Clark Zone | Partly Cloudy | Gen. Santos | Partly Cloudy |
| Tagaytay | Partly Cloudy | Zamboanga | Partly Cloudy |
| Legazpi | Partly Cloudy | Cagayan de Oro | Partly Cloudy |
| Calapan | Partly Cloudy | Davao | Partly Cloudy |

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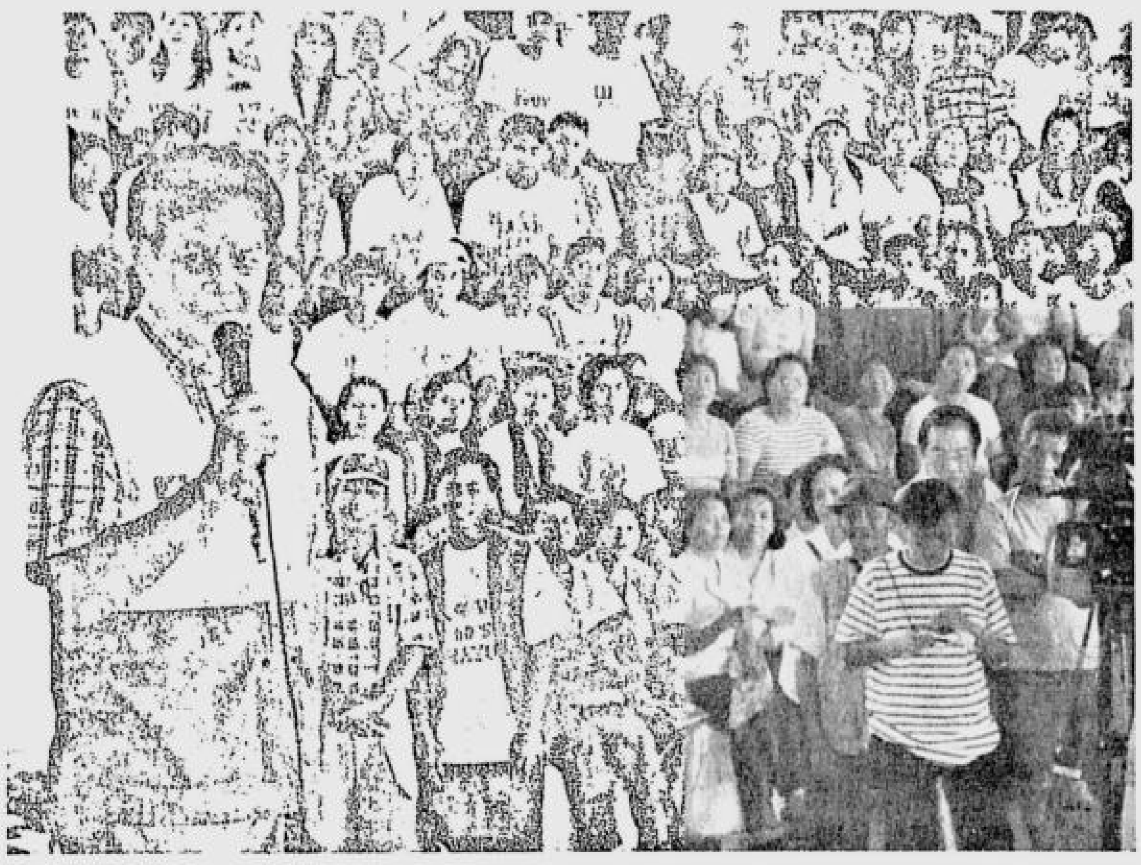
# Second FrontPage



LACSON stumping in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte

## No conditions please, Ping told

**By Carlito Pablo**

SAN Fernando, La Union—Actor Fernando Poe Jr.'s camp is willing to initiate unification talks if the group of breakaway opposition presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson refrains from setting conditions.

So said Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III less than a week after a one-on-one meeting between Poe and Lacson that generated much speculation as to which candidate would withdraw from the race.

Sotto explained that the chances for unity would be greater if neither party imposed conditions on the other.

A few weeks ago, Lacson said he would like to see Poe slide down to being his running mate. Earlier this week, he suggested that Sen. Edgardo Angara, a key supporter of the actor, be taken out of the Poe-led Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino if unification talks were to succeed.

On both occasions, Lacson was roundly slammed by KNP leaders, with Poe himself saying that the recommendation to oust Angara was "uncalled for."

In a brief interview Wednesday evening, Poe's running mate Sen. Loren Legarda dismissed talks that the actor was set to give way to Lacson. "Why will he do that, when he will become President?" Legarda quipped.

Poe said Tuesday in Vigan, Ilocos Norte that he was not about to quit.

## Cops tighten security on Abu suspects

**By Christian V. Esguerra and Philip C. Tubeza**

POLICE have beefed up security at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City where 122 suspected Abu Sayyaf members are detained, following the escape of 18 of their cohorts from the Basilan provincial jail on Black Saturday.

This after Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño asked the authorities to increase security at the camp and Director Ricardo de Leon of the National Capital Region Police Office admitted Bagong Diwa's jail was "too crowded."

Yesterday, De Leon assured the public the Abu Sayyaf suspects were well-guarded with new security measures in place.

More policemen armed with long firearms now guard the building holding the suspects, De Leon said, although he would not divulge their exact number, citing operational restrictions.

Security during trials has also been fortified, according to De Leon, after Zuño also asked officials to provide a bigger trial room at the camp, where the suspects are being tried for alleged crimes committed in Mindanao.

The makeshift trial room at the camp now has grills, separating the Abu Sayyaf suspects from the judge and prosecutors, De Leon said.

"We put in the grills to make sure that no untoward incident happened during the trial," he said.

The new security measures came in the wake of the bloody escape of 18 Abu Sayyaf detainees along with 35 common criminals in Basilan. Eleven of the terror suspects have been either been killed or recaptured.

Four days before the Basilan breakout, a Department of Justice official said the jail holding the suspects in Taguig was overcrowded and the situation was expected to worsen with the expected transfer of another batch of Abu Sayyaf members from Zamboanga City to the camp.

"They might spring out of there. There should be maximum security," Zuño said at a press conference yesterday.

He also said the trial venue was small and was so crowded during one hearing that an Abu Sayyaf suspect sitting behind him could have easily strangled him with his handcuffs.

The chief prosecutor said that at another hearing government witnesses became frightened when they noticed that the Abu Sayyaf suspects outnumbered their police guards.

The terror suspects are being tried by the Pasig City Regional Trial Court but the hearings are held at the camp for security reasons.

A TIME TO REFLECT
Part 8

VOTE WISELY

Barely a month before the May 10 elections, allow us to reiterate the criteria in choosing a presidential candidate that may help you, the voters, make a wiser choice, as mentioned in our "Time to Reflect-Part 6" ad, entitled "Criteria Required for Presidential Candidates".

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales in his recent pastoral letter reinforces our stand. He said "know your leaders before you want them". In making your choice of national leaders, "consider the future of your family and country". Your vote, singly and collectively, determines whether we, as a people and as a nation, will rise or fall.

In this light, here are our guidelines:

INTEGRITY

More than simple honesty, the leader must have faith in God and must fear God. He or she must be moral in his or her personal and public life. In serving the people, he or she must be guided by principles and not by what is popular or expedient.

CHARACTER

The leader must believe in and practice good governance, accountability, and transparency. He or she must be able to say NO to graft and corruption. NO to bribes. NO to crony capitalism.

COMPETENCE

The leader must have the vision, the direction, the experience, the skills, the education, and the political will to address the most complex problems of the country that have accumulated over the last 50 years.

CHARISMA

The leader must be able to inspire and unite our people to make sacrifices for the common good.

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## Nur asks Muslims to reject terror

**By Cynthia D. Balana**

DETAINED Moro leader Nur Misuari yesterday called on Filipino Muslims to reject terrorism and help thwart a "Madrid-type bomb attack directed at high-impact targets" in Metro Manila and key cities in the Visayas and Mindanao.

In an open letter, Misuari asked Filipino Muslims not to give aid in any form to the Abu Sayyaf or any Islamic group out to terrorize the country.

Misuari has been issuing appeals for sobriety since Speaker Jose de Venecia visited him at his military detention cell in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, early this year.

Misuari, former head of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), is being held on rebellion charges after an aborted uprising in Jolo, Sulu, in November 2001 that left over 100 people dead.

Also the erstwhile governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Misuari had asked De Venecia and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzalez for help in releasing his statement to the media.

"I feel it is my moral duty to appeal to all our Muslim brothers and to the lumad communities—in Metro Manila, Mindanao and elsewhere in the archipelago—not to be deluded into embracing terrorism as a weapon for redressing historical grievances and acts of injustice against the Bangsamoro people," he said.

Earlier, Misuari wrote an open letter to Moros endorsing President Macapagal-Arroyo's candidacy.

He cited the President's policy of reconciliation, peace initiatives with insurgent groups and support for a shift to a parliamentary-federal system of government to propel Mindanao's economic development.

Misuari had called Ms Macapagal the "peace president."

He said any terrorist act would deal a severe blow to the 1996 peace agreement he signed as MNLF head with the government and to the imminent resumption of peace talks between the government and the other Muslim separatist group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"Economic reconstruction is underway, and more aid from the international community and the government are assured. Terrorism will negate everything and offer nothing," Misuari said.

## 10,000 new teachers

PUBLIC schools will be getting their badly needed 10,000 new teachers this school year, after all.

The hiring of much-needed additional teaching staff was in danger of being scuttled when Congress failed to pass a new budget, reenacting the 2003 budget instead.

This resulted in the education department not getting the additional P4 billion it was asking for on top of the P106.4 billion it will be getting from the reenacted 2003 budget.

Without the additional funds, the department will not be able to hire 10,000 new public school teachers and 1,600 principals, build 2,500 classrooms and transfer 200,000 students to private schools.

But Education Undersecretary Jose Luis Gascon said education officials have found a way to get around the problem. After many discussions with Malacañang, the Palalce has agreed to "realign" the budget, he said.

"We'll get a big part of the budget that we lost. So this coming school year we'll get 10,000 additional teacher items," Gascon told a group from the Alliance of Concerned Teachers recently.

He thanked the teachers for helping to lobby with Malacañang.

"Your mass actions helped," he said.

Having been disallowed from hiring new teachers last year, the department can no no longer postpone the hiring of new teachers, Gascon said.

The Department of Education needs about P900 million to hire 10,000 new teachers.

A large part of the DepEd's budget goes to the salaries of its 470,000 public school teachers.

The education budget has fallen behind the country's population growth which has led to serious shortages of classrooms and teachers in public schools. *Dona Pazzibugan*

# GMA says she likes actors, but not FPJ

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SHE admires actors, but not the likes of Fernando Poe Jr.

Calling FPJ an actor requires apologies to actors, President Macapagal-Arroyo, once more unleashing her intellectual snobbishness towards her chief rival Fernando Poe Jr., conveyed in a press conference in Lucena City yesterday.

"I admire actors, it is the inexperienced that's the problem," she said when asked about Poe's objection to her regarding him a mere actor.

In a speech before a presidential series of the business elite in Makati City on Wednesday, Ms Macapagal warned the business community and the voters at large against choosing on May 10 the "inexperienced actor who is still reliant on advisers to make important decisions."

Yesterday, Ms Macapagal who professed to abhor low-level campaigning upped the insult-trading by differentiating Poe from the rest of the actors.

"I admire actors, my son is an actor. I have two actors in my lineup," Ms Macapagal said.

She was referring to her eldest son, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, who starred in some movies that flopped. Mikey is running for a congressional seat in Ms Macapagal's home province of Tarlac.

Two actors—Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid—are running under the administration K-4 senatorial slate. Surveys show that Revilla, former governor of Cavite and chair of the Videogram Regulatory Board, appears to be a front runner in the senatorial race.

Ms Macapagal dismissed Poe's attacking her alleged greediness for using government funds for her campaign.

"We have answered that several times," she said.

Michael Defensor, campaign spokesperson of the President, said the opposition should not politicize the implementation of the President's programs even during the campaign season.

"These are unfounded accusations and the people are getting angry (at the opposition) because these are services that they want implemented and it's their right to receive these services," Defensor said.

Defensor had his hands full of denying left-and-right allegations of Malacañang's bullying and coercing its rivals to withdraw from the race.

He denied preacher Eddie Villanueva's accusation that Malacañang was behind the Supreme Court's decision to allow his nemesis Eddie Gil to continue his presidential campaign for the meantime.

Villanueva was protesting Gil's inclusion because they use the same name Eddie, which could disenfranchise their voters.

"We have high respect for Brother Eddie. He is our ally in reforms and Malacañang will not do this to him," Defensor said.

Defensor expressed hope that Villanueva would sill join hands with Malacañang in pursuing reform programs.

# GMA advisers conspired to bring economy to its knees, says Herrera

RESPONDING to allegations that Fernando Poe Jr. was "an inexperienced actor who is too reliant on advisers to make important decisions," the opposition yesterday claimed President Macapagal-Arroyo had conspired with her advisers to bleed the public coffers dry and bring the economy to its knees.

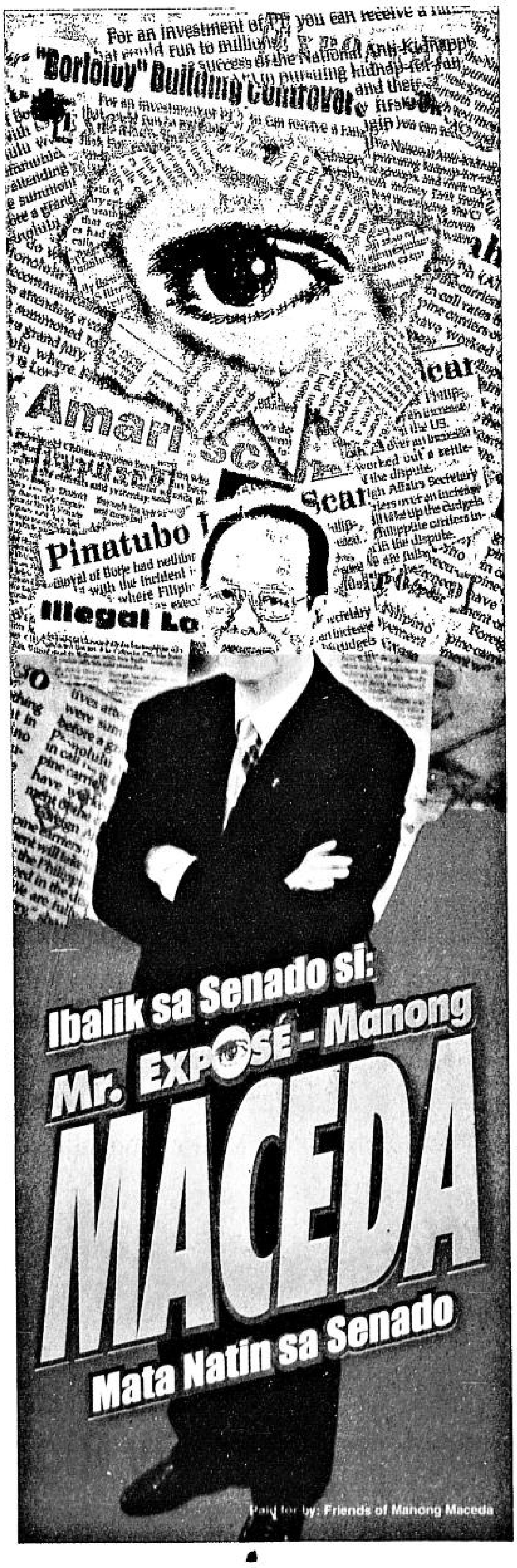
"It is the public thinking that President Arroyo, her husband Mike and her advisers conspired with each other in the many scandals that rocked the Arroyo administration," said senatorial candidate Ernesto "Boy" Herrera of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino. "It only means that the people believe Mrs. Arroyo is the brains behind the train of grand larceny, her husband as her able lieutenant, and her advisers as the ones who executed her plans."

Herrera, in a press statement, said "the Arroyo administration's dismal record of fighting corruption speaks for itself. President Arroyo will not send either her husband or her advisers to jail because they comprise her cohorts who can achieve her self-aggrandizing objectives."

He cited the allegation that Hernando Perez, former secretary of justice, received $2 million in exchange for a legal opinion establishing the legitimacy of the controversial Impsa deal. "That was part of the $14-million bribe the Arroyo camp reportedly received barely two weeks after she rose to power in 2001," he claimed.

"It was also President Arroyo's adviser, Gloria-Tan Climaco, whom the German firm Fraport accused of extortion in exchange for government's intervention in the Piatco issue involving the construction and operations of the third air terminal in Naia," he said. "Ms Tan-Climaco, a respectable business figure, could not have extorted from Fraport without the President's blessings."

Herrera also alleged that President Macapagal's adviser on foreign investments, Dan Roleda, brought Macau gambling mogul Stanley Ho to her to discuss his investments in the country, which Church leaders said would bring the country to moral decay. Ho reportedly gave hefty donations to Ms Macapagal's campaign kitty, but this was denied by Malacañang.



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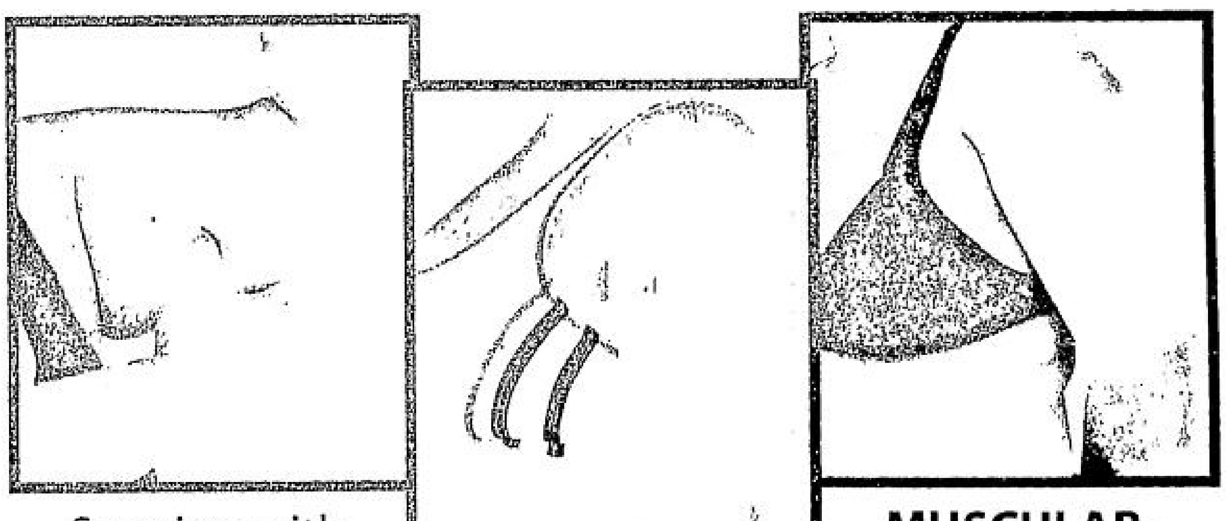

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# NTC out to curb text scams, blames telcos

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

THE GOVERNMENT is planning to create an interagency task force to curb scams perpetuated through text messaging and drum up support on the need to register the prepaid subscriber identification module (SIM) cards, the National Telecommunications Commission said.

Text scams have surged in the last two years, and according to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), fraud committed using the mobile phones had duped victims some P5 million last year alone. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), on the other hand, said it had received more than 100 queries on "lotteries" using the text.

The NTC said 500 complaints had reached their desk in 2003 and had blocked 387 SIM cards used in the scam. In the first quarter of this year, the Commission received 102 complaints and blocked 104 SIM cards.

NTC Deputy Commissioner Jorge Sarmiento underscored the importance of educating the public against various scams, especially in the provinces where these have become widespread.

Sarmiento explained that subscribers should be made aware that if the text message did not come from a four-digit number or the message asked the recipient to pay or donate something, then it would likely be a scam.

## Stand-off

"The NTC had been wanting to register the prepaid SIM cards but the telcos have secured a restraining order on the NTC order. If there is enough public awareness and if there is enough pressure on telcos, they might change their minds," NTC Chair Ronald Solis said yesterday.

Solis said the task force would be comprised of representatives from the DTI, the AMLC, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police.

The NTC issued an order in 2000 for dealers to register all SIM cards and verify the given addresses, but mobile phone firms said that such undertaking would raise the cost of the SIM cards and affect the viability of their business.

Of the 22 million cellular phone subscribers, about 90 percent are prepaid customers.

"The telecos say there is added cost with the SIM registration. But what if the public was willing to shoulder the additional cost? These are options we could talk about," Solis said.

Solis said while the NTC could not implement a stricter policy on registration on SIM cards because of a court injunction, it would block SIM cards of mobile phones used in the scam.

As a result of the stand-off between the NTC and the phone firms, Solis said text scams had remained prevalent and perpetrators had often used the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) as take-off point.

## Clamor of consumers

Jones Campos, head of Globe's public relations, said it was the consumers who were opposed to the NTC's move to register the SIM cards that's why phone companies had sought to block the agency's plan.

"The whole prepaid community is opposing it. We just listen to our consumers," Campos said. "The idea of a prepaid card considers the convenience of consumers otherwise registration would be as cumbersome as a postpaid subscription. And there is also the issue of added cost."

Smart spokesperson Mon Isberto promised to reply but as of press time had not called back.

## The scam

According to AMLC executive director Vicente Aquino, perpetrators usually send text messages at random telling receiver that he or she had won P1 million in a raffle sponsored by the BSP, Pagcor or PCSO.

The text message tells the "winner" to call a particular number where somebody pretending to be the Central Bank governor or the president of Pagcor or PCSO would answer. Victims are usually asked to first deposit a 10 percent withholding tax to a certain bank account number before they could claim the prize.

Another version of the scam would ask victims to send PIN codes of prepaid cellular phone cards for a chance to win P1.5 million to P2.5 million. After sending the PIN code, the victim would get a text message saying that he or she had won the raffle, but to claim the prize, he is asked again to remit a 10 percent withholding tax to an account number.

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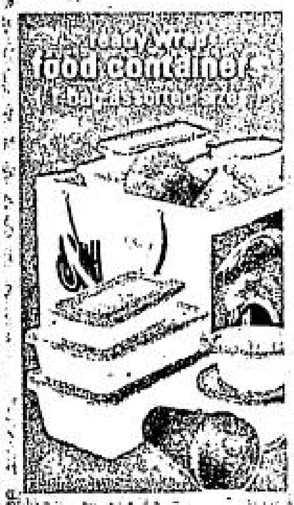
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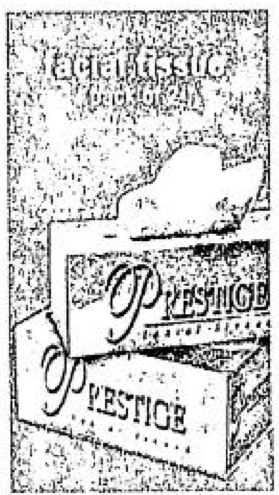
facial tissue
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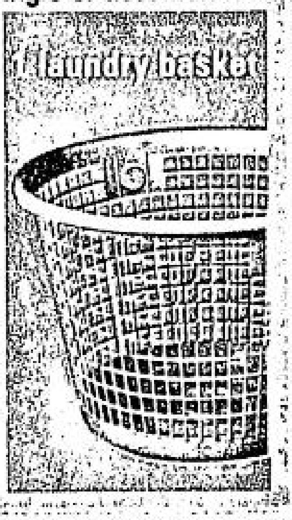
1 throw pillow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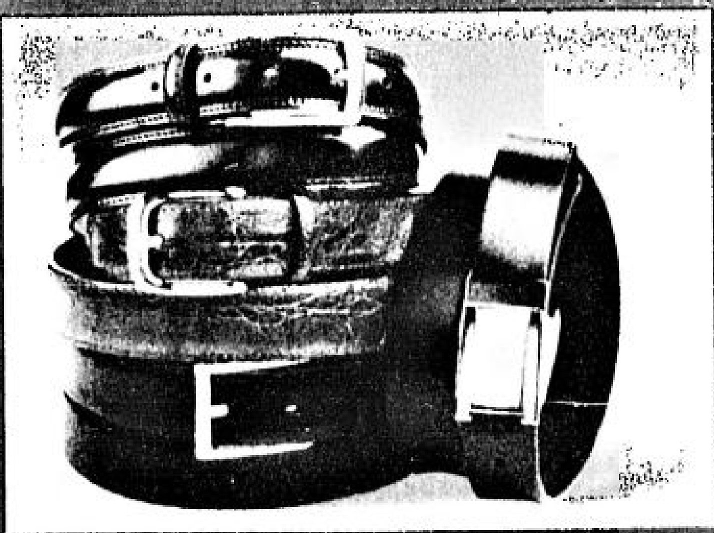

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5398 Series of 2003

# US willing to accept 'boat people'

By Jerome Aning

THE UNITED States is willing to take in most of the 1,855 Vietnamese asylum seekers who have been in the Philippines since 1989.

This is according to an agreement signed yesterday by Acting Justice Secretary Merceditas Gutierrez and Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelly Ryan of the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.

The joint plan calls on both parties to find a comprehensive humanitarian solution for the asylum seekers, the last to flee Vietnam 14 years after the communist takeover of the country following the withdrawal of US forces.

Most of the Vietnamese are staying in refugee camps in Palawan; some have moved to Metro Manila and other cities to eke out a living while waiting for the approval of their asylum papers.

Philippine immigration authorities had rejected the Vietnamese asylum seekers who arrived after 1989, labeling them as political refugees.

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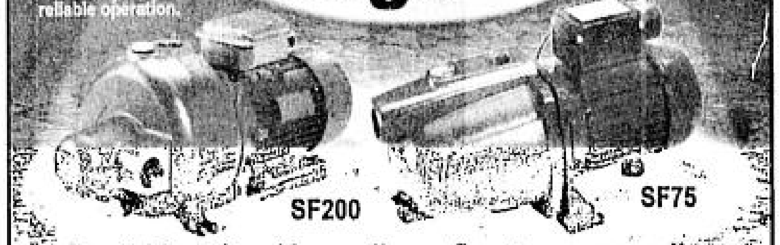

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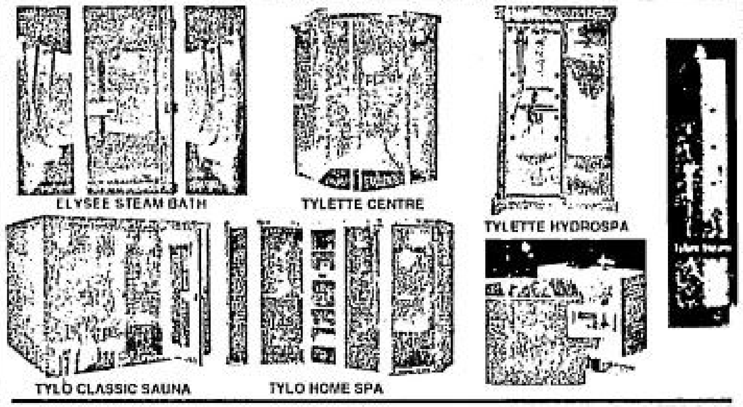

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# 39 Malaysians, Indons nabbed for poaching

AUTHORITIES have detained 39 Indonesian and Malaysian fishermen for alleged poaching in border waters off the southern Philippines, the military said yesterday.

A navy task force searching for an Indonesian and two Malaysians abducted by suspected Abu Sayyaf Muslim guerrillas came upon nine foreign fishing boats on Wednesday whose crews failed to present fishing permits, Navy spokesman Captain Geronimo Malabanan said.

The boats and the 39 crewmen were detained in waters surrounding Taganak and Baguan islands in the Tawi-Tawi group near the Malaysian state of Sabah. They are now being held by the coast guard in Taganak, Malabanan said in a statement.

*AFP*

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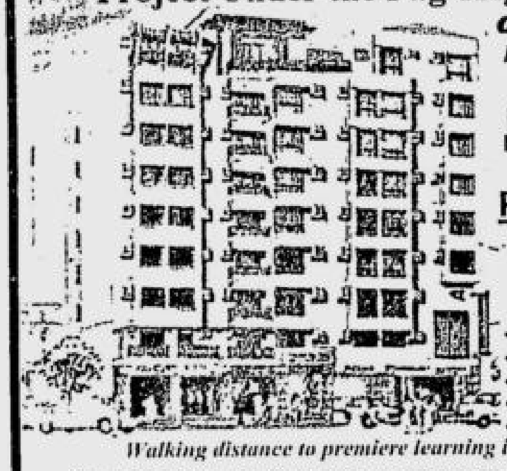

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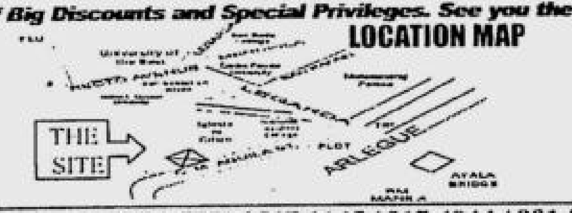

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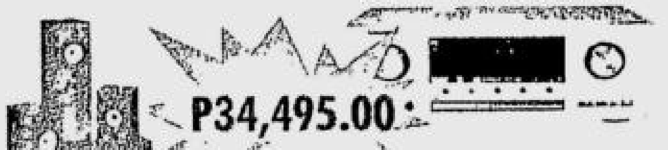

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# GMA orders Iraq exit plan

From page A1

peace and order authorities in Iraq, taking into particular consideration the fact that civil order and authority have not been fully restored," she said.

Ms Macapagal also announced the contingency plan to reporters at the Lucena West Elementary School in Lucena City.

But Villar said Ms Macapagal's administration had sufficiently shown support for the US war on terrorism.

He also pointed out that a major incident involving Filipino troops would be more difficult to cope with than the possible loss of US support.

*"Mas delikado na magkaroon ng insidente kaysa magalit ang Amerikano,"* he said, adding that such an incident might derail the "otherwise certain victory" of the President in May.

## Demand of withdrawal

Ms Macapagal was one of the first world leaders to embrace the US-led war on terror.

But cause-oriented groups and other sectors have demanded the withdrawal of the troops from Iraq, saying the Philippines could be targeted by America's enemies.

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# *Ombudsman to file graft raps vs DPWH usec*

**By Armand N. Nocum**

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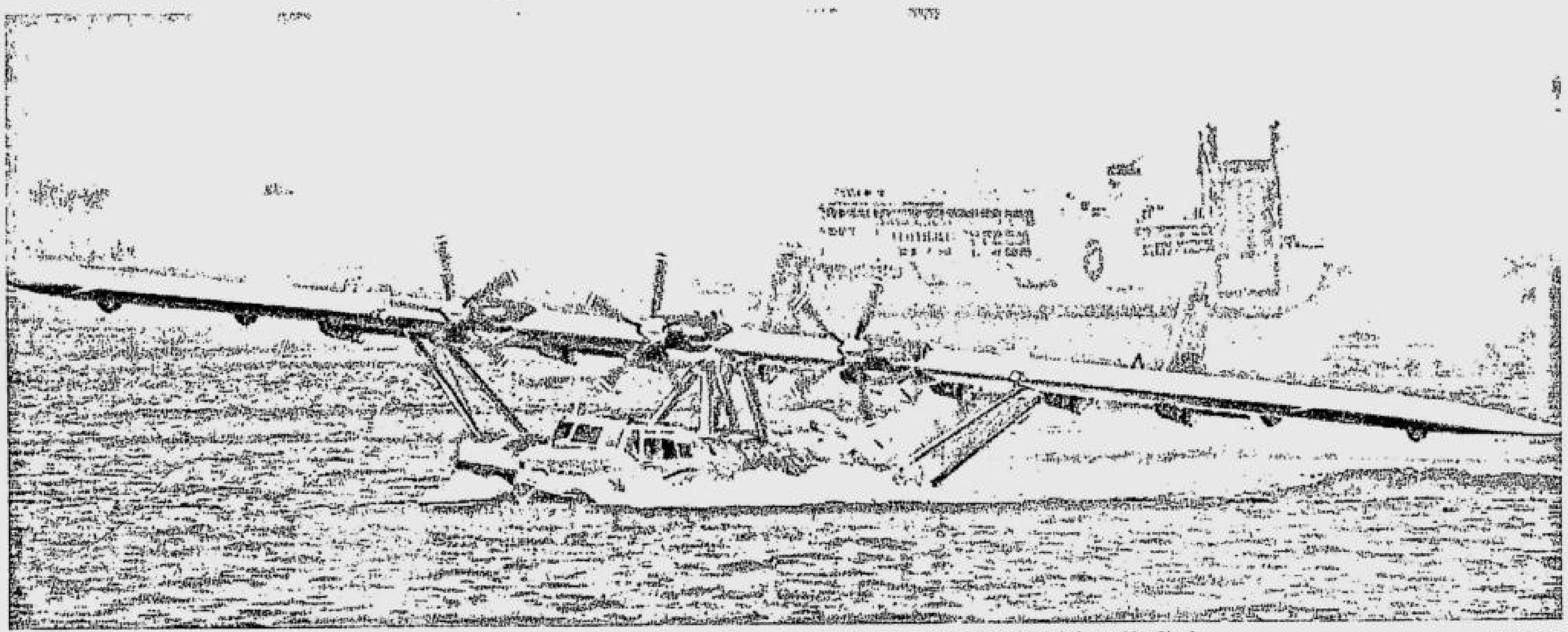

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Then the group will go around Europe before heading back to Asia, officially ending the tour in Hong Kong and coming back to Clark Air Base in Pampanga on Dec. 25.

# Comelec in no hurry to place Gil back on presidential list

From page A1

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This seemed contrary to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos' interpretation the other day of the court decision announced last Tuesday.

Abalos said the Comelec would have to comply and reinstate Gil's name in the official list of candidates, effectively stopping the poll body from implementing its disqualification order against Gil.

## Contradictory

Abalos' and Tuason's remarks highlighted the contradictory ways by which the court order directing the parties to the case to preserve the status quo was being interpreted.

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But the Comelec en banc affirmed the second division's decision on April 1, saying that Gil was unable to raise substantial issues to warrant a reversal of the decision which declared him a "nuisance candidate."

On April 6, Gil asked the Supreme Court for a temporary restraining order, which was granted on April 13.

The high court directed the respondents to file a comment within five days and "observe the status quo prevailing before the filing of the petition."

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# GMA orders Iraq exit plan

From page A1

peace and order authorities in Iraq, taking into particular consideration the fact that civil order and authority have not been fully restored," she said.

Ms Macapagal also announced the contingency plan to reporters at the Lucena West Elementary School in Lucena City.

But Villar said Ms Macapagal's administration had sufficiently shown support for the US war on terrorism.

He also pointed out that a major incident involving Filipino troops would be more difficult to cope with than the possible loss of US support.

*"Mas delikado na magkaroon ng insidente kaysa magalit ang Amerikano,"* he said, adding that such an incident might derail the "otherwise certain victory" of the President in May.

## Demand of withdrawal

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### POE-MARCOS ALLIANCE

# Wrong move, FPJ told

MILITANT groups who hope to see the end of the Macapagal administration in the May 10 polls admitted that this possibility grew dim with the "major tactical blunder" committed by opposition presidential bet Fernando Poe Jr. when he forged an alliance with the family of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The rabidly anti-Macapagal group Pamalakaya yesterday acknowledged that Poe's "rubbing elbows with people with (a) dark past and sinister motives" could cost him votes and hurt his chances of beating the President.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan called Poe's move "shameless and opportunistic" and a "slap on the face" of the thousands of victims of the Marcos regime.

"The FPJ alliance with the Marcoses bodes ill for the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos dictatorship," said Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes.

"By his latest actions, he has already tied his hands and has lost whatever little political and moral high ground he may have had in pursuing justice for the Marcos victims," he stressed.

"FPJ my be thinking that sheer popularity can let him get away with anything," Reyes added.

"Da King made a wrong move," said Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap, as he warned the Poe camp of a "political disaster."

His group, he said, had earlier advised Poe to "distance himself" from both the Marcos regime and likewise discredited Estrada administration since it could "harm his presidential bid or clip his chances of beating" President Macapagal.

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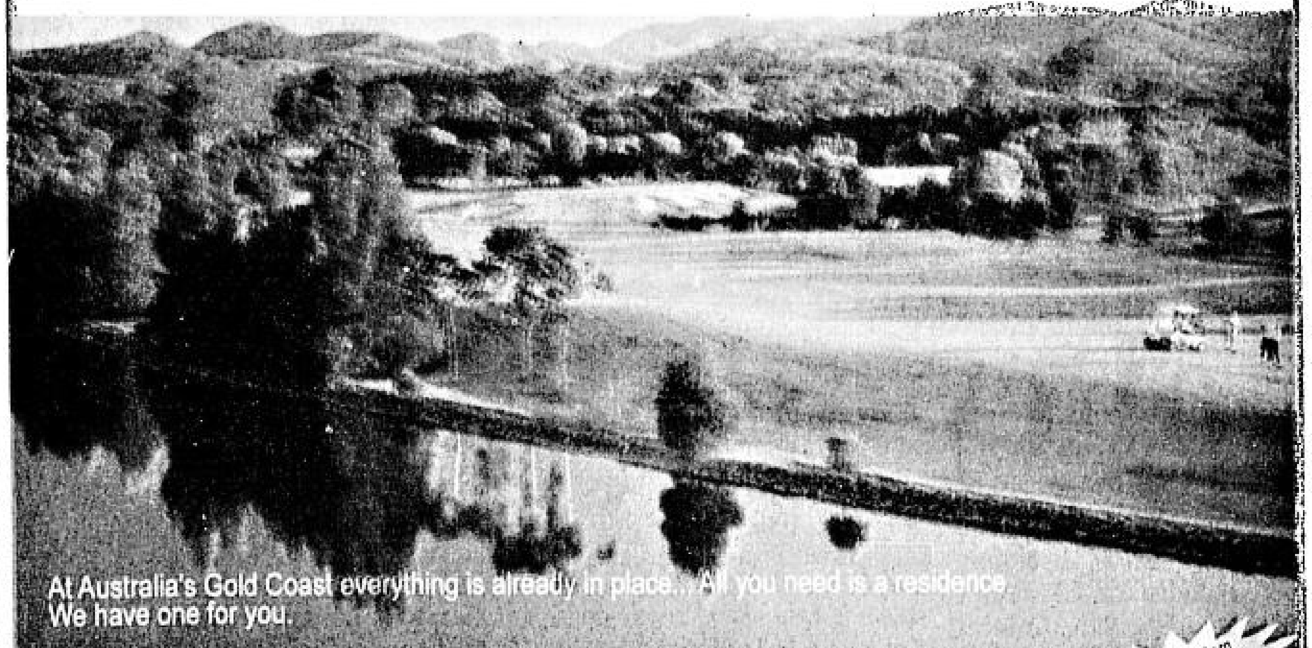
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Email : reia@philonline.com
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# KL peace talks to start late April

FORMAL talks aimed at ending the three-decade Moro insurgency in the Philippines are expected to begin late this month and a peace accord could be signed this year, the government's chief negotiator said Thursday.

Silvestre Afable, who also heads President Macapagal-Arroyo's management staff, said the talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), set for the last week of April in Malaysia, would cover security and the rehabilitation and development of Mindanao, the "ancestral domain" of the country's Muslim minority.

"I believe we can finish the negotiations within the year," Afable told the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines in a briefing. "This is formal in the sense that you really have an agenda that will end in a settlement."

The most contentious discussions would be about ancestral domain— the traditional Moro homeland in the southern Philippines— although the two sides would not immediately talk about the "actual delineation of geographical areas," Afable said.

He said the peace process was already enhancing security and stability in troubled Mindanao by isolating terrorists.

He said there had been persistent intelligence reports that Jemaah Islamiya (JI) militants were operating within MILF factions and rebel enclaves.

### Peace process

Rebel leaders have denied giving sanctuary or allowing Muslim extremists to operate from their bases.

The peace process was pushed forward after the rebels met a key government demand and issued a statement disavowing any links to terrorism.

"There is a mutual sentiment between the government and the MILF that the peace talks are important to the isolation of terrorists or lawless elements from MILF formations in Mindanao," Afable said.

Police last month said they foiled a plan to bomb malls, trains, embassies and other targets in Metro Manila by a cell of the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf group that allegedly was trained by the JI.

"More progress in the peace process will give us more gains in constricting and boxing out (terrorist) elements," Afable said.

The government signed a cease-fire agreement with the MILF in mid-2003 after the rebel leadership formally renounced terrorism and pledged to help the government identify and arrest "terrorists" in areas of MILF operation.

Afable said an international cease-fire monitoring team should deploy in Mindanao in late April or early May after an advance party from Malaysia, which would lead the team, surveyed the area earlier this month.

A World Bank-led team is also expected in Mindanao once peace talks begin to assess economic aid priorities on the island. *AP, AFP, Reuters*

Tanong ng Bayan
InqTV
Ngayong Alas-10 ng Gabi
Pagkatapos ni Roco, susunod na ba si Ping?
Pagkatapos tumulak patungong Estados Unidos si Raul Roco, hindi maiiwasan na isipin ng marami na si Ping Lacson naman ang susunod na aatras. Pang-apat siya sa mga survey, at kailangan ni FPJ ang mga botante niya. Pero aatras nga ba si Ping?
Alamin ang sagot, mamayang alas-10 ng gabi, sa InqTV on ABC.
(May replay bukas, alas-8 ng umaga.)
ABC

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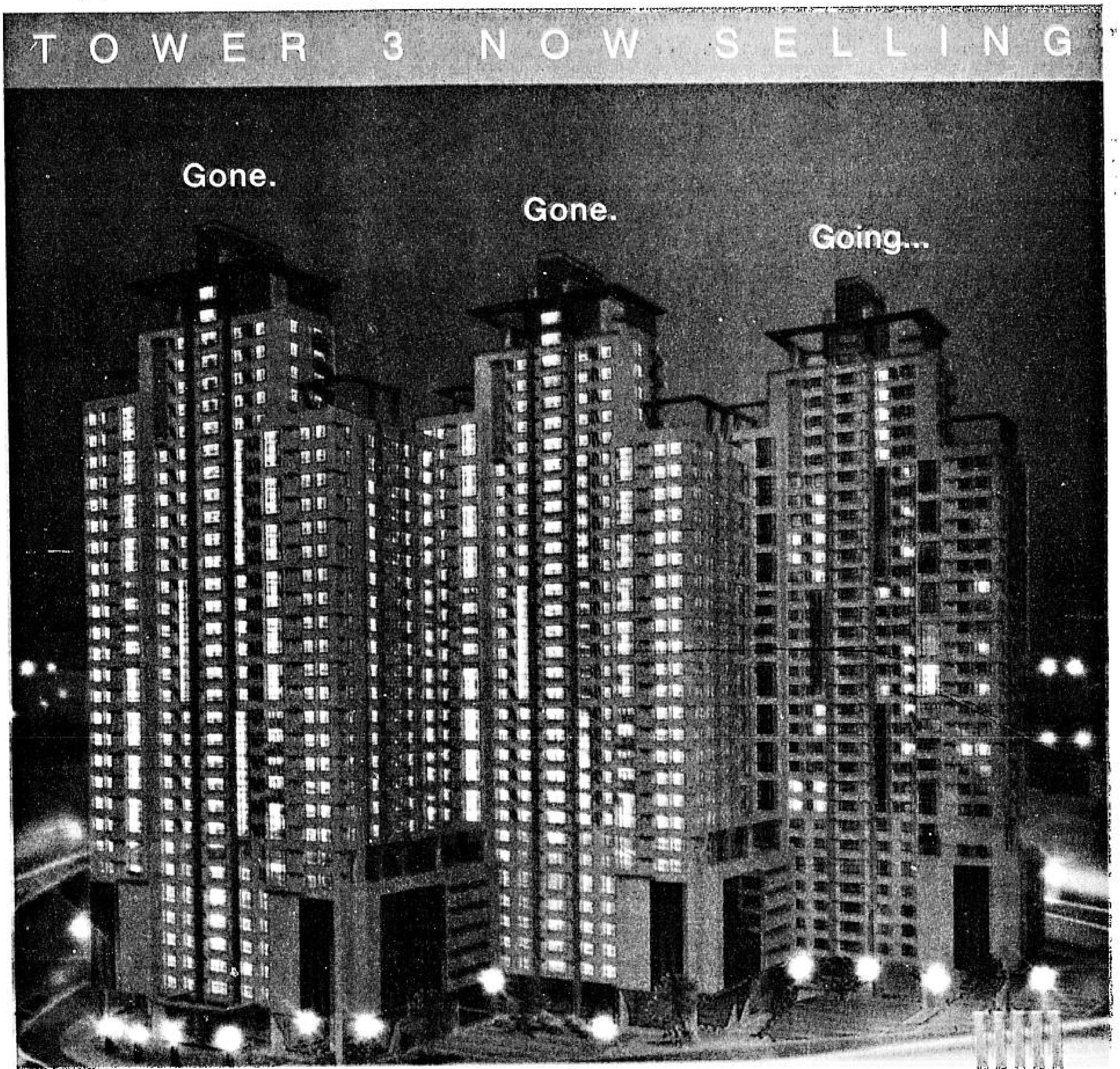

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*The Columns Experience*
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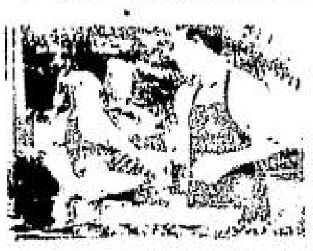

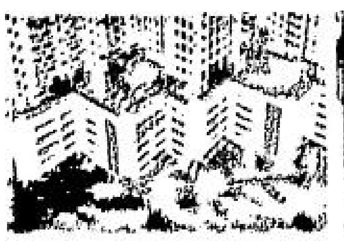

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# The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

# Bush reverses US policy on Mideast

**WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush, breaking with decades of US policy and outraging Palestinians, said Israel could keep part of the West Bank in a future peace deal that now appears more distant than ever.**

Bush coupled what Israel hailed as a historic statement on Wednesday with an endorsement of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's unilateral Gaza pullout plan and a negation of any right of return of Palestinian refugees to what is now Israel.

Sharon will fly home on Thursday armed with what he came to Washington for—US "guarantees" he can flaunt in the face of opponents of his proposal to uproot all Gaza settlements and four of the 120 in the West Bank.

"In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949," Bush said at a White House news conference with a beaming Sharon.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie, seeing the sum of all his people's fears realized, immediately denounced the statement as unacceptable.

"Bush is the first US president to give legitimacy to Jewish settlements on Palestinian land. We reject this; we will not accept it," he glumly told reporters at his West Bank home.

A senior Israeli official in Sharon's entourage called the statement unprecedented. For decades, through Republican and Democratic administrations, the United States has officially viewed Israeli settlements as an obstacle to peace.

Bush, who like Sharon has made a battle against "terrorism" paramount in Middle East peacemaking under a US-backed "road map," has now shifted to view at least some of the enclaves as permanent.

"Things were said here by the Americans that were never said before by any president or any administration," the Israeli official said.

Sharon still has a key hurdle to surmount before any pullback can begin—a May 2 binding ballot among the 200,000 members of his right-wing Likud party on approving what he has dubbed a disengagement plan.

Opinion polls in Israel have shown strong support for a move out of the Gaza Strip, a power base for Islamic militant groups dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish state. *Reuters*

**THIS picture dated 1969 shows an elderly Palestinian woman refugee crying after she lost her tent in a storm at the Baqa'a Agency camp in Jordan. US President George W. Bush said on April 14 that Palestinian refugees must settle in an eventual Palestinian state, essentially saying they must give up the right of return to lands in Israel.** AFP

# 'Bin Laden' offers truce with Europe

CAIRO—In a new recording broadcast on Arab satellite networks Thursday, a man who identified himself as al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden offered a "truce" to European countries that do not attack Muslims, saying it would begin when their soldiers leave Islamic nations.

"I announce a truce with the European countries that do not attack Muslim countries," the taped message said as the stations showed an old, still picture of Bin Laden.

While the tape, which ran in full at more than seven minutes, made clear overtures to Europeans—"our neighbors north of the Mediterranean"—it also tried to drive a wedge between Europe and the United States. It vowed revenge against America for Israel's assassination of a militant Palestinian leader and denounced the United States as using the Iraq war for corporate profiteering.

There was no way to verify the speaker's identity, though it sounded like past Bin Laden tapes.

Several audio and video tapes of al-Qaida's No. 2, Ayman al-Zawahri, have been released in recent months, but Thursday's tape was the first purportedly from Bin Laden since September. Then, a video tape showed Bin Laden climbing down a craggy mountainside with al-Zawahri.

Ayman Gaballah, editor of Al-Arabiya, said only that the pan-Arab television network received the tape from "our sources." He would not say if the tape was received at its headquarters in the United Arab Emirates or in a bureau elsewhere, such as Pakistan or Afghanistan. *AP*

# Italy outraged but uncowed by execution of hostage in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Italy vowed on Thursday to keep its troops in Iraq even as the killing of an Italian hostage sent a chilling signal of the new risks foreigners face from insurgents battling the US-led occupation.

About 20 buses carrying Russian workers headed for the airport in an evacuation organized after the kidnapping and swift release of three Russians and five Ukrainians in Baghdad.

Sunni rebels fought US Marines overnight in the battered town of Fallujah, where residents said air strikes had hit several districts. There was no word on casualties.

A tense standoff remained unresolved in the holy city of Najaf, where US forces are poised for action against a rebel Shiite cleric they have sworn to capture or kill.

"They have destroyed a life. They have not cracked our values and our efforts for peace," Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said after the killing of Fabrizio Quattrocchi.

Al Jazeera television received a videotape of the private security guard's murder, which it said was too bloody to screen.

The killing by a previously unheard of Iraqi group followed a kidnap spree that has snared foreigners from a dozen countries this month, Iraq's bloodiest period since Saddam Hussein was ousted a year ago. It was the first such publicized killing.

Al Jazeera said the captors had threatened to kill three other Italian hostages, colleagues of Quattrocchi in a US security firm, if Italian troops were not withdrawn. Italy's ambassador in Qatar identified Quattrocchi in the footage.

Italy said earlier it would not give in to "blackmail" to save the hostages but was working with Iran and others for their release. After news of Quattrocchi's murder, Berlusconi sent a senior official to Iraq to coordinate the effort.

Berlusconi, a loyal ally of US President George W. Bush, sent almost 3,000 troops to Iraq, where bloodshed and kidnapping have rattled nerves among other countries with troops there.

Japan said it was checking reports that two more Japanese had been abducted. The captors of three seized last week say they will be killed unless Japanese troops leave Iraq.

Kidnappers freed French journalist Alexandre Jourdanov on Wednesday, but more than a dozen foreigners remained captive.

Saraya al-Mujahideen, the group holding the three Japanese, said in a statement broadcast on Al Arabiya television on Thursday that it was targeting Americans and nationals of other countries that have troops in Iraq or support the occupation.

Saraya al-Mujahideen delivered the message in a handwritten letter given to Jourdanov, saying it had freed him after making sure he did "not represent the American occupation." *Reuters*

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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL
6F Atrium of Makati, Makati Avenue, Makati City

## RULES AND REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 281 PROVIDING FOR DEFERMENT OF EVICTION, FORECLOSURE AND CANCELLATION OF HOUSING ACCOUNTS AND THE FORMULATION OF AFFORDABLE RESTRUCTURING PROGRAMS DURING SUCH DEFERMENT

### ARTICLE I

### TITLE, AUTHORITY, PURPOSE, CONSTRUCTION AND SCOPE

**Section 1.** *Title* – These rules shall be known and cited as the Rules and Regulations Implementing Executive Order No. 281, otherwise known as "PROVIDING FOR DEFERMENT OF EVICTION, FORECLOSURE AND CANCELLATION OF HOUSING ACCOUNTS AND THE FORMULATION OF AFFORDABLE RESTRUCTURING PROGRAMS DURING SUCH DEFERMENT".

**Section 2.** *Authority* – By virtue of Section 5 of Executive Order No. 281, the Inter-Agency Task Force, which is composed of the Secretary General of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) as Chairman with the Presidents of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and Social Security System (SSS) and representatives from the Senate Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement and the House Committee on Housing and Urban Development as members, is hereby tasked to promulgate the rules and regulations implementing the program, "PROVIDING FOR DEFERMENT OF EVICTION, FORECLOSURE AND CANCELLATION OF HOUSING ACCOUNTS AND THE FORMULATION OF AFFORDABLE RESTRUCTURING PROGRAMS DURING SUCH DEFERMENT."

**Section 3.** *Purpose* – These rules and regulations are formulated in recognition of the economic crisis, which has affected the paying capacity of housing loan member borrowers in the low income group, resulting in a number of them being delinquent in paying their monthly amortizations, to give temporary relief to the affected borrowers for them to be able to work out solutions to keep their homes, and to provide the SSS, GSIS, NHMFC, HDMF, NHA, HGC, HUDCC, non- government organizations, private sector and beneficiaries of the government shelter program with guidelines for the comprehensive implementation, participation and compliance with the program of providing for the deferment of eviction, foreclosure, and cancellation of housing accounts and formulation of affordable restructuring programs during such deferment.

**Section 4.** *Construction* – These rules shall be construed and applied in accordance with and in furtherance of the policy and objectives of the law. In case of conflict and/or ambiguity, which may arise in the implementation of these Rules, the concerned agencies shall issue the necessary clarification. In case of doubt, the same shall be construed liberally and in favor of the beneficiaries.

**Section 5.** *Scope* – These rules and regulations shall cover all delinquent housing loan accounts for cancellation and foreclosure, foreclosed accounts and consolidated accounts with all government agencies and institutions under the National Shelter Program such as: NHMFC, HDMF, NHA, HGC, SSS and GSIS.

**Section 6.** *Exclusion* - In no instance shall the following loan accounts be covered by these implementing rules and regulations:

a. unoccupied housing units
b. accounts with no single payment since take-out
c. restructured accounts
d. consolidated accounts which were already disposed through sale or rent-to-own scheme
e. accounts covered by developers buyback guarantee

However, the SSS, GSIS, HDMF, HGC and NHMFC shall be allowed to include under the coverage of the program any exclusions enumerated in Section 6 from the implementation of this program provided it is permitted in their respective charters.

### ARTICLE 11

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 7. ***Definition of Terms*** – As used in these Rules, the following terms shall mean as follows:

1. **Outstanding Balance** – refers to total of principal, interest, penalties/surcharges, fire insurance premium (FIP), mortgage redemption insurance (MRI) premium, (If policy has not been lapsed, unpaid membership contributions, and foreclosure expenses (If the account is already foreclosed).
2. **Delinquent Borrowers** – refers to those whose accounts are in arrears for at least six (6) months in the payment of their housing loan obligations including those who have not availed of any penalty condonation, those who have annual income of P300, 000 and in arrears for at least 2 years, those whose loan terms have expired but whose mortgages have not been foreclosed, or if foreclosed, the certificate of sale is not yet registered and the heirs of deceased with unpaid balance after application of the proceeds of MRI.
3. **Arrears** – refers to total *unpaid* principal, interest and penalties if not condonable plus unpaid MRI and FPI.
4. **Restructured amount** – pertains to the new principal, which is equivalent to the sum of the principal and interest and penalties not condoned.

### ARTICLE III

### DEFERMENT AND RESTRUCTURING OF DELINQUENT HOUSING LOAN ACCOUNTS

**Section 8.** *Deferment* **- The eviction, foreclosure and cancellation of housing accounts including all proceedings in connection therewith, shall be deferred until 09 August 2004.**

Section 9. *Restructuring of Delinquent Housing Loan Accounts.* **In keeping with the intent and purpose of EO 281, there is hereby established a Delinquent Housing Loan Restructuring Program.**

Section 10. ***Coverage***- For six months from the effectivity of Executive Order No. 281 or until August 9, 2004, all housing loans with HDMF, NHMFC, HGC, SSS and GSIS, that have at least a six-months unpaid monthly amortization are hereby declared covered by the benefits of this restructuring program.

Section 11. ***Minimum Payment Requirement to Restructure*** - An applicant for restructuring shall only be required to pay the unpaid MRI/Fire insurance plus one-year advance premium of MRI/FI plus value added tax.

Section 12. ***Condonation of Penalties*** - Subject to the existing guidelines of SSS, GSIS, NHMFC, HGC and HDMF, all applicable penalties shall be condoned provided that all accrued interests shall be added to the remaining balance of the principal, the aggregate of which shall be considered as the new principal amount.

Borrowers shall have the option to pay the equivalent of at least 10% of total arrears and/or outstanding balance net of applicable penalties if the applicant is qualified to avail of the penalty condonation program of SSS, GSIS, NHMFC, HGC and HDMF. The amount paid shall be applied to the restructured amount.

An applicant may be allowed to use the total accumulated value of his/her membership contribution or savings with the GSIS, SSS or HDMF to pay the required down payment, if allowed under their respective charters.

Section 13. ***Computation of restructured balance*** - The amount to be restructured shall be the outstanding balance net of applicable penalties condoned, MRI/FI premium if already paid and down payment, if any.

Section 14. ***Affordable Loan Restructuring*** - The following affordable schemes and remedies shall be adopted to bring down the monthly amortization, when applicable:

a. Lengthening the term of a housing loan account being applied for restructuring
b. Adoption of Graduated Amortization Scheme
c. Adjustment of Interest Rate to the prevailing lending rates
d. Allowing the legal heirs and successors in-interest of an applicant to assume payment of his/her outstanding housing loan
e. Rent to Own for accounts not yet disposed through sale or Rent to Own Scheme

Section 15. ***Requirements for Availment*** - To avail of the restructuring program, an applicant shall submit the following requirements:

a. **Application form**
b. **Authenticated/certified photocopy of real estate tax receipts for the quarter**
c. **Certified true copy of the latest Income Tax Return**
d. **Latest pay slip of principal borrower/awardee/co-maker and or buyer of rights**
e. **Other documentary requirements that may be deemed necessary by SSS, GSIS, HDMF, HGC and NHMFC.**

Section 16 ***National Housing Authority (NHA)***. The NHA shall extend the implementation of its existing restructuring and condonation program until 09 August 2004.

Section 17. ***Restructuring Guidelines*** - The SSS, GSIS, HDMF, NHMFC, and HGC shall issue their respective Restructuring Guidelines including additional exemptions referred to in Section 6 hereof within Thirty (30) days upon approval and publication of the IRRs and disseminate the same thereafter.

Section 18. ***Monitoring of Compliance*** - The HUDCC shall monitor the compliance by the concerned agencies and thereafter conduct continuing review and study on the implementation with the end in view of submitting recommendation on the genuine affordable restructuring program.

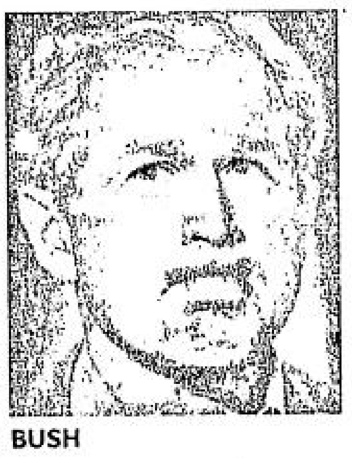
**Section 19.** Separability Clause **- The provisions of these Implementing Rules and Regulations are hereby declared separable, and in the event that any such provisions are declared null and void the validity of all other provisions shall not be affected.**

Section 20. **Effectivity** – These Implementing Rules and Regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in any two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

**VICE CHAIRMAN AMADO S. BAGATSING**
**Officer-In-Charge, HUDCC**

# White House strategy: No apology for Sept. 11

**By Adam Nagourney**


BUSH

WASHINGTON—It was no accident that President George W. Bush passed up five chances on Tuesday night to offer regrets, contrition or an acknowledgment that he might have made mistakes in handling the Sept. 11 attacks or the war in Iraq.

In fact, his advisers said on Wednesday that there was near unanimity in the White House, starting with Bush himself, that the last thing he should do in his first prime-time news conference since the Iraq war was to show any sign of remorse. And aides said Bush did not want to offer the sort of emotional apology that Richard A. Clarke, his former counterterrorism specialist, made—to the annoyance of White House officials—at the Sept. 11 commission hearings three weeks ago.

After days of emotionally wrought Sept. 11 panel hearings, and rising questions about the course of the war in Iraq, Bush's performance on Tuesday was described by some Democrats and independent analysts as at least potentially risky.

Bruce Buchanan, a professor of political science at the University of Texas, noted how President John Kennedy had called a news conference to take responsibility for the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba and that it had bolstered his stature with American voters.

"He took the heat, and his polls went through the roof," Buchanan said. "I think what people like is the willingness to accept responsibility, even when the consequences may not be good."

But, Bush's performance at his news conference was the latest manifestation of a leader who has seldom expressed remorse in public. And White House aides said it reflected a change in the candidate and the political tenor from 2000, with Bush intent on presenting himself as an unwavering wartime president while diminishing his Democratic opponent, John Kerry, as weak on national security.

One of his senior advisers broke out laughing on Wednesday as he recalled the persistence of reporters pressing Bush about remorse. He suggested that contrition would have been a sign of weakness that was alien to Bush and more typically found in the corridors of the Democratic Party.

"We must return to the days of Jimmy Carter!" the aide said in a sarcastic invocation of a Democratic president that Republicans have long sought to equate with presidential weakness. "We must have malaise! We must have a weak president! We must have a morose Kerry-like apology!"

Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., said: "I don't recall people asking that of FDR after Pearl Harbor. The bottom line is, we were attacked. Trying to rewrite history is just playing the blame game."

The history of presidential contrition is certainly a sparse one. There have been two notable examples in the past 50 years: Kennedy and the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and Ronald Reagan, when he accepted "full responsibility" in 1987 for his administration's effort to trade arms for hostages.

Bush's advisers said the president had anticipated the line of inquiry at the news conference. One adviser said the White House had examined polling and focus-group results in determining that it would be a mistake for Bush to appear to yield.

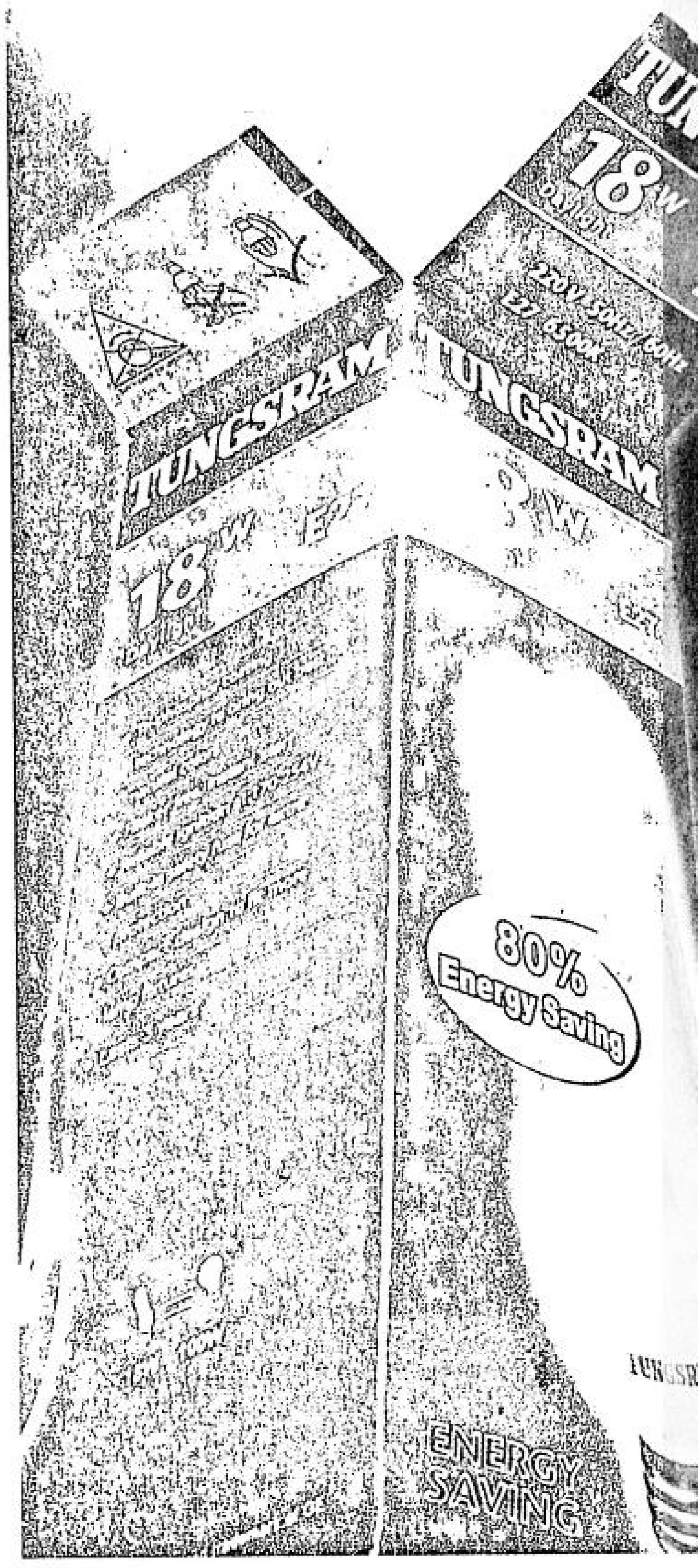
The advisers said there were pragmatic considerations in his response to the challenges to his policy. Most obviously, they said, Bush did not want to give an answer that Kerry might use against him in the campaign. In addition, they said, any suggestion of error might undercut Bush's standing with his most fervent supporters, and thus complicate his efforts to challenge Kerry on this issue.

"It would really damage him tremendously with his base," said a Republican close to the White House.

Not incidentally, several aides to Bush said his unrelenting posture had been as much aimed at a domestic audience as it was at showing strength to America's enemies.

White House aides and Democrats said they saw little chance that any significant number of voters would seriously blame Bush for the Sept. 11 attacks. But Democrats have increasingly argued that Bush might be vulnerable on the war in Iraq, given the fervor with which he has advocated it, and the difficulties on the battlefield now.

Joe Lockhart, who was a press secretary under President Bill Clinton, argued that Bush undercut his own credibility by declining to acknowledge any error on Iraq, from anticipating the intensity of the resistance US forces have faced to the original justification for going into Iraq. *New York Times*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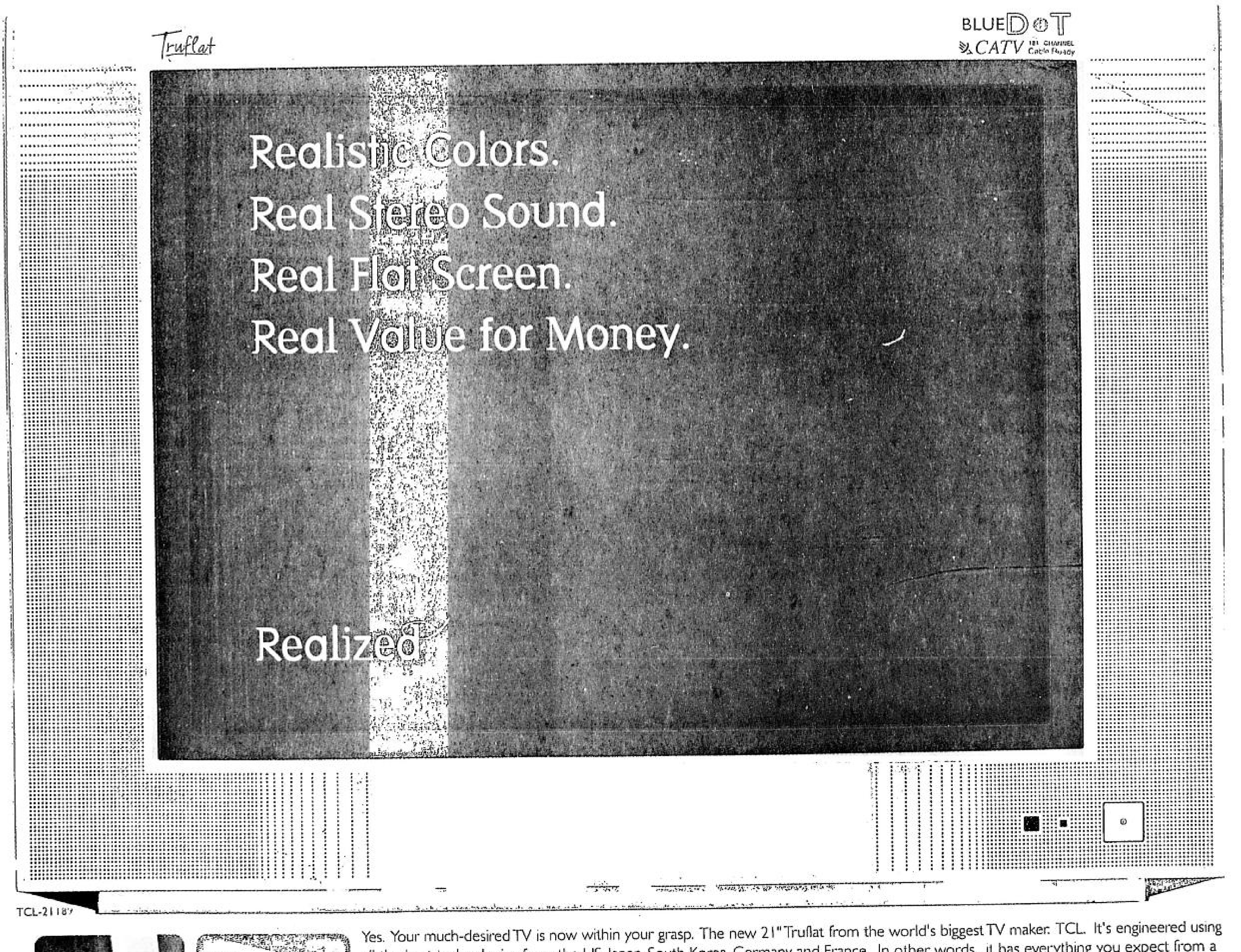

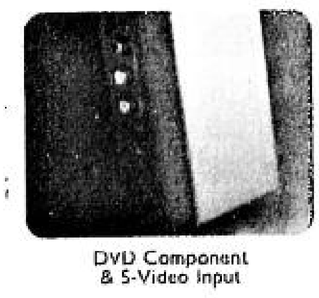
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# Susan: Stop calling him 'Da King'

From page A1

who was here to campaign for her husband.

Contrary to accusations that he was ill-tempered, Roces said Poe was soft-spoken.

"We wouldn't be husband and wife this long if he's that kind of a person," said Roces, who traces her roots to Iloilo. She spent her early childhood days in Molo district here before her family moved to Bacolod City, Negros Occidental.

Roces explained that politics was never in Poe's plans until people clamored for him to run for president.

He then found this as an opportunity to serve, she said.

### Greatest asset

Poe's greatest asset is his sincerity to serve the people when he becomes president, according to Roces.

"What my candidate offers is his sincerity, but then others would say that it's not enough to govern the nation. Well, let's see," she said at a news conference.

Roces said her husband, a high school dropout, was qualified to seek the highest post in the land.

"It says in our Constitution that as long as a person knows how to read and write and is a natural-born Filipino, he can run for president. That is my candidate. And where and what he's doing now is his answer to the call of people who had made him what he is today," she said.

### Abusing the unschooled

Roces hit back at President Macapagal-Arroyo, who called her husband "mindless" and unable to lead the country without the aid of advisers.

"Most often he is being criticized as though nobody but the well-schooled and well-experienced have the sole right to govern our country," she said.

She said the country was in a sorry state because of the well-educated and the well-experienced.

Roces said she had a high respect for people with higher education but not for Ms Macapagal's kind.

EDWIN BACASMAS

**AN AMOROUS** fan holds up Poe's photo during his presidential campaign rally in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija, on Thursday.

"I admire those with higher education but it should not be used to abuse the less-fortunate. It's very sad to note that we have a leader of that type," she said.

Roces said Ms Macapagal should not take it against her husband if he planned to tap the help of experts in running the country.

"She too has a long list of advisers," she pointed out.

### Mean

Roces advised the President to refrain from name-calling.

"But it looks like, lately, Mrs. Arroyo is being very mean to her fellowmen. Well, I guess it's her manner of speaking or probably she was bred that way. Now, she has shown me in particular what a highly educated and very experienced person does and says," she added.

Even if she has been in show business for over four decades, Roces said she still could not easily take these criticisms.

"Criticisms are not foreign to me in the kind of profession that my husband and I are in. It can be helpful if it is constructive, but destructive intentions in criticizing one, of course, I'm only human, I don't like that," she said.

### Inventing lies

"Telling the truth much as it hurts, I can take. But inventing lies is a different story. So just like anybody, I have mixed feelings. There are times when I laugh, there are times when I feel so hurt and I cry a lot."

Contrary to what Ms Macapagal pictured Poe to be, Roces said her husband was his own man and could make decisions, however difficult, by himself.

KNP spokesperson Mike Romero, who accompanied Roces, said her visit to Iloilo was a follow-up to the campaign sorties by Poe and the rest of the KNP slate on April 2 to strengthen the KNP's winning chances in Iloilo, which Senate President Franklin Drilon earlier declared as "PGMA Country."

Roces paid a courtesy call on Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and visited public markets.

## *Do not belittle me, FPJ tells GMA*

From page A1

Poe's handlers earlier said that a better and improved Poe would emerge from his Holy Week retreat-cum-workshop with his advisers.

The actor's allies had said that a "repackaged" Poe would become articulate and engage media more intensively.

# 11 Poe media staffers quit, new convenor named

From page A1

the efforts of the KNP media bureau, the so-called creative group and a team in charge of scheduling media events.

Tagle's subordinates include Joel Paredes, former head of the Philippine Information Agency during the Estrada administration; Erick Garafil, a former newsman identified with the camp of Estrada, and Iskho Lopez, former entertainment columnist of Manila Standard.

### Limited budget, new client

Reyes said he was sticking it out with Poe. "I'm with FPJ all the way."

He said he gave his "blessings" to his staff members when they told him the other day that they were resigning.

He confirmed that his group [illegible] been operating on a limited budget. "I'm sure you understand that we're working within our limited resources," he told reporters.

He said he appreciated the group for "sympathizing with some of my predicaments." But when asked about these, he did not elaborate.

Sources, however, said the resignation of the group had to do with its dissatisfaction over how the media campaign of Poe was being handled.

For one thing, the group was said to be sympathetic to Reyes, who had recently been getting flak from Poe's own people for issuing statements for the KNP presidential candidate apparently not to their liking.

### What really happened?

Poe shrugged off the resignation of more than half of the members of the KNP media bureau, a development that left reporters covering his campaign without "shepherds" for more than half a day yesterday.

"We'll have to adjust," Poe said when informed that 11 members of the KNP media bureau had left purportedly because they were not being given enough funds and were feeling sidelined by parallel media groups in the opposition camp.

Poe said that he hadn't been officially informed about the development but noted that he'd like to know what really happened.

"This is the first time I heard about it," Poe said. "I'll have to find out what happened."

Poe said that he might have to "talk" with Guevara, Yamsuan, Pagkalinawan, Manalo, Pahilga and the others.

### Mix-up

Pagkalinawan and Pahilga, who were in charge of the Northern and Central Luzon sortie, left for Manila yesterday morning, leaving reporters to the care of media guides from the group of Rep. Francis Escudero, Poe's spokesperson.

Because of mix-ups, reporters had to travel from San Fernando, La Union, where they were billeted Wednesday evening, to Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija without media shepherds.

The Escudero group has been known as the parallel media organization operating alongside the official KNP media bureau headed by Reyes.

### Binay helping media efforts

Reyes also said that Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay had started helping out in media efforts for the Poe campaign but he did not give details.

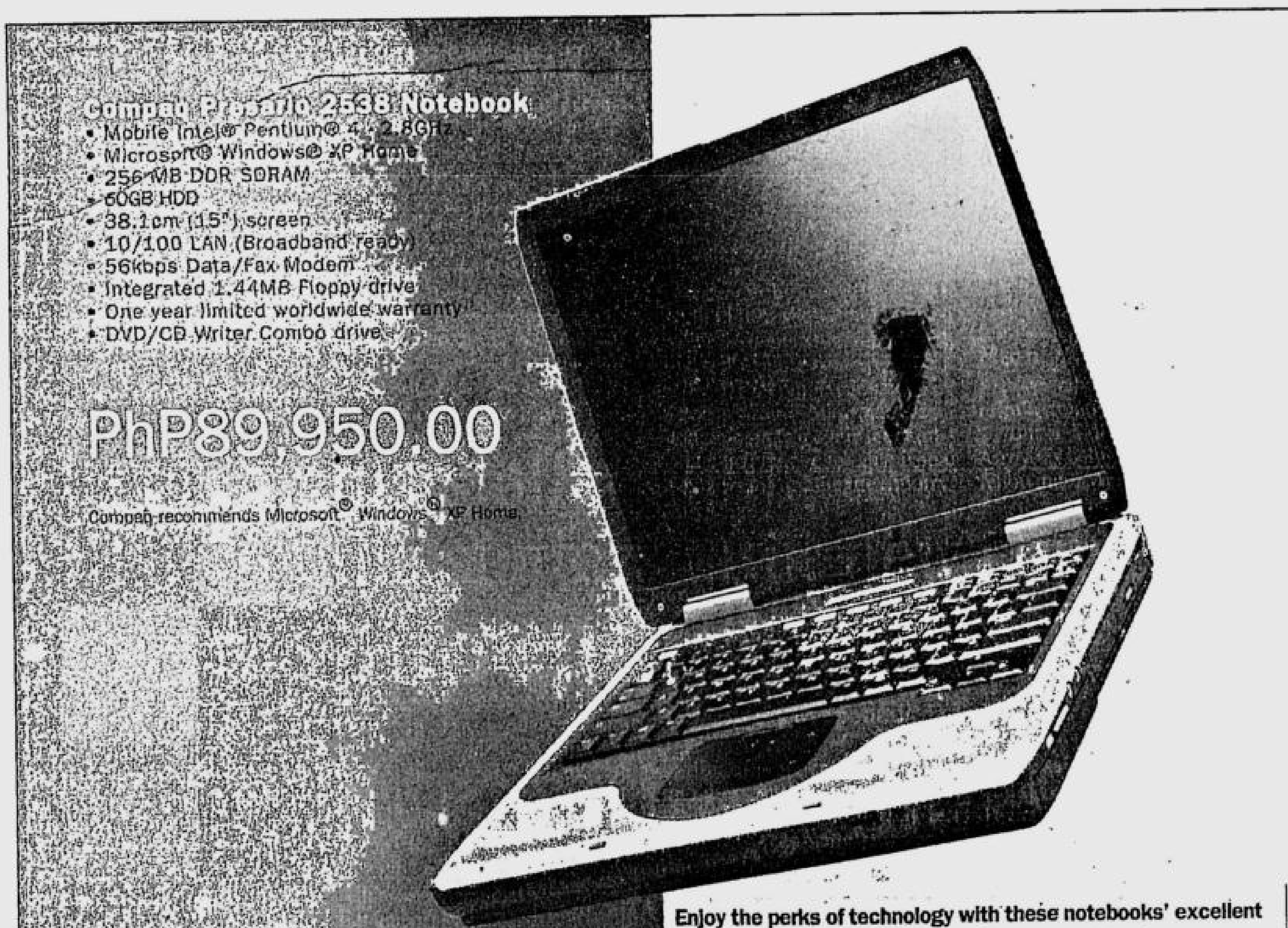
Binay is a new member of the KNP executive committee for the campaign. He is in charge of handling local KNP political leaders and providing, among others, political inputs.

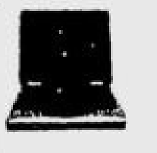
Reyes earlier confirmed that Binay was the new "overall campaign manager" of the Poe campaign.

But apparently because the Poe camp didn't want to create the impression that its campaign was being mishandled by Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III, who has been Poe's "personal campaign manager" from the start, there will be no formal titles for both Binay and Sotto.

The camp of Angara has also designated Marcial Reyes, an old hand on Angara's Senate staff, to help out in handling the media. Reyes reports directly to the Angara group.

"I'm sticking it out with FPJ," Reyes said.





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# PCSO chief in critical condition following stroke

From page A1

SINGSON DE LEON

yesterday after she collapsed while presiding over a corporate planning workshop here.

De Leon, 57, was discussing the agency's gains and losses in 2003 during the workshop at the Microtel Inn and Suites when she suddenly dropped her microphone. She complained of a headache.

## Brain surgery

The PCSO's security team and doctor rushed De Leon to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center, where she immediately underwent brain surgery to remove a blood clot.

Dr. Manuel Factora, BGHMC chief, told the INQUIRER that De Leon's condition was "poor" and that she needed to be confined for two more days, or until her condition stabilized.

At past 4 p.m., doctors were still stitching up the burst vein to contain the bleeding, said Factora.

De Leon's elder brother, former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, flew to BGHMC by helicopter from Vigan to be with her.

"We were supposed to hold this corporate planning session in January, but she moved it to April," said Israel Estrella, PCSO assistant general manager for corporate planning. Another PCSO official said the postponement was precisely because De Leon was sick at the time.

Top executives of the agency said they would stay in Baguio until De Leon got better. The PCSO chief was analyzing the sweepstakes program by way of preparing for a new administration after the May 10 elections when she blacked out, according to Teresa delos Reyes, chief of the workshop secretariat.

In her speech De Leon said: "Towards the (end) of 2004, the entire nation must see that the PCSO, with or without me as head, is ready and able to meet the challenges of the new administration."

## Incurring deficits

While Estrella later said the PCSO was generally "in good health," De Leon mentioned that "fiscal management ... (is a problem), actually more of a puzzle, as the agency has been incurring deficits (in) its operating fund despite the volume of generated funds, which should have been sufficient (to) cover total operating expenses."

She said the 1998 deficits, incurred when the agency undertook on-line lottery operations, were "corrected by an operating income of P50.173 million in 2002, and by an even higher P60.4 million earnings in 2003."

Lottery revenues breached the P10 billion mark last year, following "a stagnating figure of about P6 billion (annually) over the past years before 2001," De Leon said. Still, she lamented, the gains failed to match the losses.

She said the goal of her administration, which started three years ago, had been "the building up of resources" to cope with "a voluminous backlog." The backlog, she told her executives, "was already being perceived as an unsavory situation in the PCSO."

De Leon made no direct references to a pending election complaint accusing PCSO and the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. of providing President Macapagal-Arroyo with campaign funds. *With a report from Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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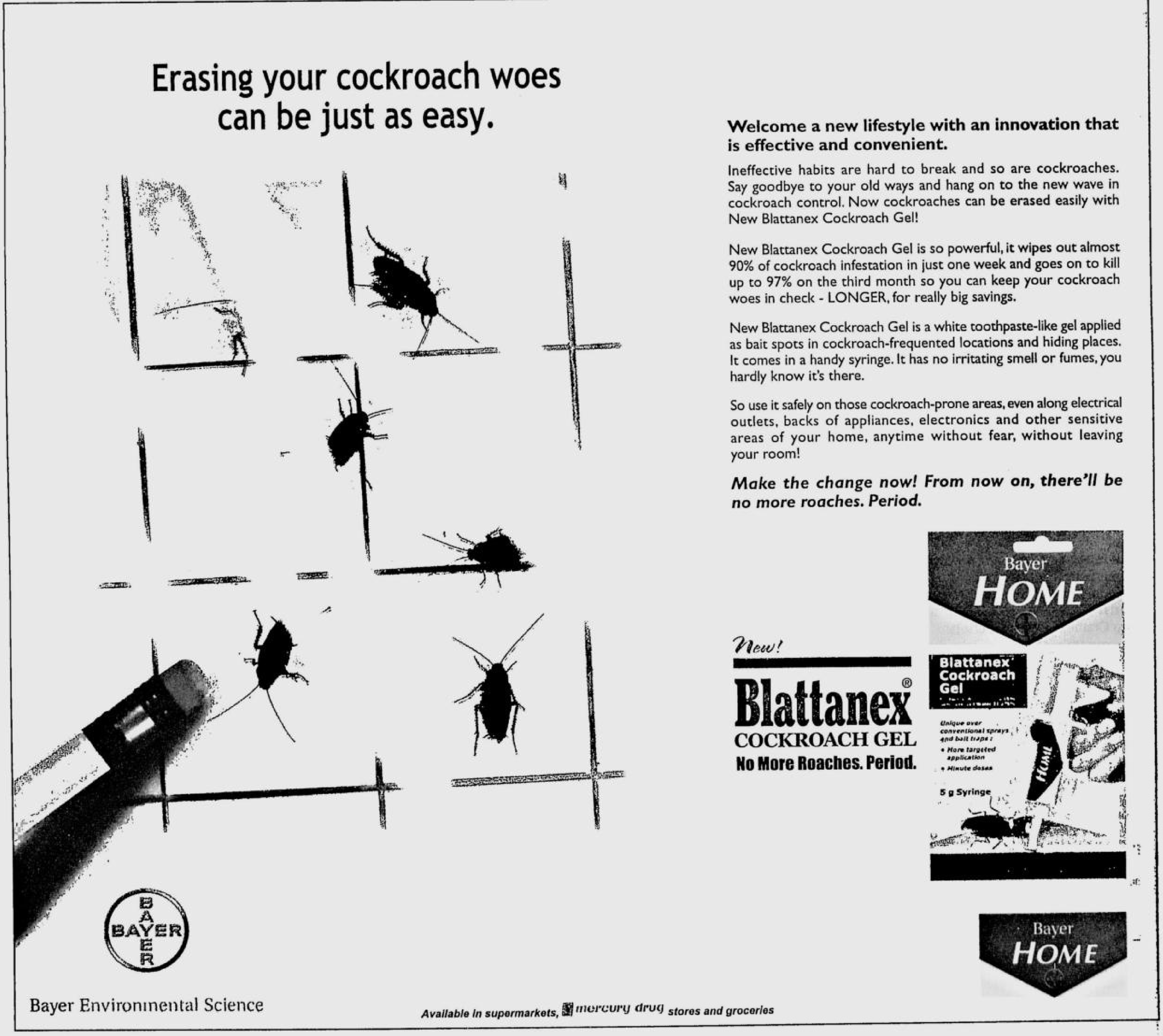

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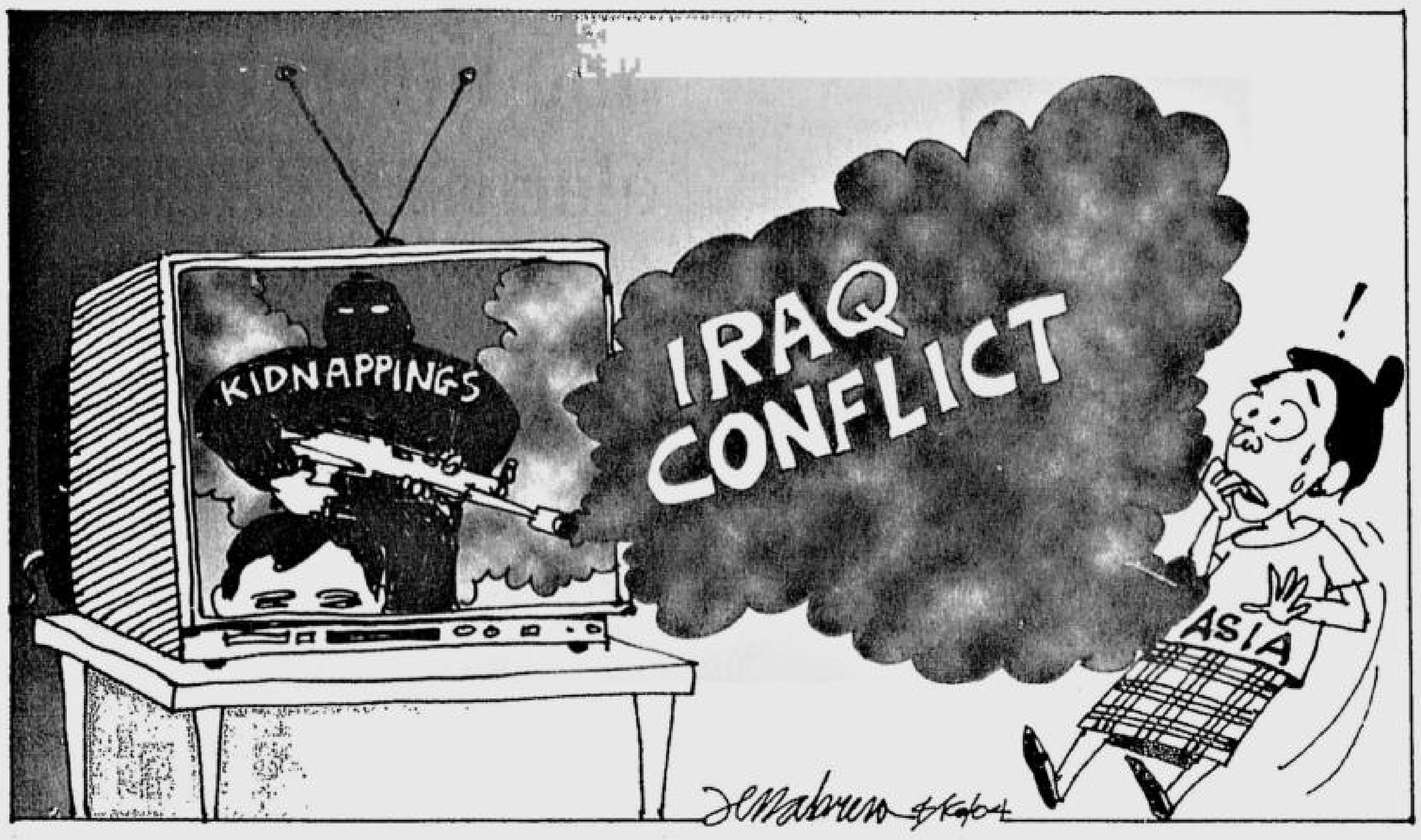

# Self-inflicted terror

**EDITORIAL**

MANILA and Washington have taken pains to disabuse the impression made by a New York Times report about a recent meeting among security officials of the two countries that allegedly put Manila on the spot for backsliding in the war on terrorism. No, Manila and Washington said, Manila was not chided for its anti-terrorist campaign that appeared to have lost steam and even seemed to be sputtering to a stop. The meeting was merely a routine exchange of information, nothing more, nothing less, officials said.

Ah, but after the March 22 meeting, Manila seemed to have gone on a new offensive against the Abu Sayyaf. Eight days later, on March 30, Philippine authorities, acting on intelligence provided by the United States, arrested six people suspected of planning terrorist attacks in Manila. One of them was Alhamser Manatad Limbong, alias Kosovo, who was among those behind the 2001 Dos Palmas kidnappings and the beheading of the American hostage Guillermo Sobero. The United States now wants Limbong extradited to face criminal charges for the deaths of Sobero and Martin Burnham, the missionary who was killed when the Philippine military attempted to rescue the hostages.

It is useless to argue that the meeting was not meant to deliver a "diplomatic reproach" to Manila. In the first place, the New York Times, barring the oft-repeated complaint that the American press mainstream is run by the Jews, is by and large a credible agency. Moreover, the article, written by Raymond Bonner and Carlos Conde, who are reliable reporters, was quoting an unnamed source who was describing in his or her own words what took place. In addition, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales seems to have confirmed the report when he told the Times that the cause for concern had been addressed. "I think they have changed their position now," he told the Times, referring to the American concerns.

So there should be no quibble whether a diplomatic chiding was delivered. The fact is that the meeting, merely routine and peremptory as those who took part in it might have presented it, seemed to have goaded Manila into cracking down anew on the terrorists. This should be enough assurance for Manila and the rest of the terrorist-stricken world.

In contrast, denials won't suffice to assure anyone that the world can sleep well. And even if the government insists on denying it has not slackened on hunting down terrorists, the reality is that its campaign has largely been inconstant and haphazard. To be sure, it is worrisome that on the heels of the meeting and the reinforced crackdown, several suspected Abu Sayyaf members broke jail in Basilan last Black Saturday. It is damning that the government was caught flat-footed on the most superstitious date in the Philippine security calendar. (Remember the Black Saturday coup of 1988 and the Black Saturday escape of Gregorio Honasan the following year?)

This is the second time that suspected terrorists have escaped detention. Last year, Manila suffered a major international embarrassment when suspected Indonesian terrorist leader Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi escaped from Camp Crame, the headquarters of the Philippine police. In the run-up to the visit of President George W. Bush, Al-Ghozi was killed. Then as now, it seems American pressure is the catalyst to Philippine efforts against global terrorism.

But couldn't the campaign be sustained even without prodding or meddling from Washington, Canberra and London? Couldn't the government, which has vowed all-out war against terrorism, put its money where its mouth is in a coherent and consistent manner? Couldn't the government at least match its vacuous rhetoric with sterling action?

It is now easy to see why security-risk concerns have multiplied in this election season. The concern is not so much about the quality of the candidates to national offices (although the intellectual fitness of some candidates is a pressing concern, indeed). The paramount concern is that in the din and blare of the election, in the infectious circus of this heady and entertaining season of politics and even more politics, the government may miss out on the regular business of providing security to a nation on terrorist tenterhooks. This is the shame of our politics and governance. If there is terrorism, it is one that is largely self-inflicted.

# Opinion pollsters as kingmakers

**As I See It**

*Neal H. Cruz*

YOU'VE seen it all too often in the movies: In a battle, the hero stays with his comrades to the bitter end (ala the Alamo, Masada, etc.); the villain deserts his troops to save his skin.

Somehow, the sudden departure of Alyansa ng Pagasa's (Alliance of Hope) presidential candidate Raul Roco for the United States reminds me of this familiar war scene. The faces of Alyansa's senatorial candidates during the televised press conference showed it all: shock, dismay, disappointment, disenchantment, dejection. They were like orphans whose father had just abandoned them.

Of course, Roco made his MacArthurian statement: "I shall return; the fight continues" and his troops bravely declared that they will carry on. But there is little hope left for Alyansa ng Pagasa. Leaderless, it is just a matter of time. At least, Eddie Gil was deserted by his senatorial candidates; Alyansa's senatorial candidates were left behind by their standard- bearer.

The reason given for Roco's sudden departure was to seek medical treatment allegedly for prostate cancer. There is something I don't fully understand here. Prostate cancer, unlike other cancers, is not immediately life-threatening; it is a very slow-progressing cancer. Doctors don't usually subject senior citizens diagnosed with prostate cancer to surgery. Old age or other diseases will usually kill the patients before the cancer does.

In other words, Alyansa's standard-bearer didn't have to suddenly leave the election campaign in the homestretch. He could have stuck it out for the remaining 25 days of the campaign. And he didn't have to go to the United States for treatment. Prostate cancer is being treated here for a long time now. As for the pain, we have pain management specialists and clinics here in the major hospitals.

*Sabagay,* I had written in an earlier column that among all the presidential candidates, Roco looked the most unhealthy. While Fernando Poe Jr., Ping Lacson and Bro. Eddie Villanueva are all slim and trim, Roco has a potbelly, which even his flower-printed polo shirts cannot hide. The others wear their shirts tucked in because they have nothing to hide; Roco wears his shirt with the tails out because he is hiding his tummy.

Roco's pear-shaped body, any doctor will tell you, is a giveaway that he is at high risk for so-called "metabolic diseases": the dreaded trio of diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. But not prostate cancer. That is age-related; the older you get, the higher the risk of getting it.

Roco said he has been taking care of himself since his operation in 1996, exercising, eating the right food. Maybe not enough. Maybe he has not been exercising enough and still eating too much high-calorie food. Why else does he have a potbelly?

The presidency is a high-stress job and the president must be healthy to be able to cope with the stresses. Roco, in his present state of health, will have a difficult time.

*Sayang*, Roco is the best alternative to the other candidates. He is intelligent, well-educated, has the most experience in public administration, is the most qualified and best prepared to be president. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who boasts of her academic credentials and "experience" so often that it has become irritating (no doubt to contrast her qualification with that of FPJ), is no match to Roco in those fields.

Without the opinion polls, where he trails a poor third, Roco would undoubtedly get more votes.

* * *

**I think a law should be passed banning opinion polls before an election. The results unfairly influence people to vote for the leaders, the so-called "bandwagon mentality." The people choose their candidates based not on their qualifications but on their ratings in the surveys. Which make the pollsters kingmakers. They can dictate who the next officials will be. And surveys have such a strong influence on the voters that there is always the danger that candidates and political groups will try to manipulate polling firms so that their candidates will rate high in the surveys. By allowing opinion polls before an election, the citizens are actually abdicating their role of choosing their officials.**

**FPJ is popular not so much because people think he is better qualified for Malacañang but because, according to the surveys, he has the best chance of unseating GMA. Many are really afraid of FPJ's apparent lack of qualification, but they are so fed up with GMA—not so much because she herself is corrupt but because of the corruption and the people around her—that they are willing to take chances with FPJ if he has the best chance of kicking her out.**

**Roco and the others are better qualified, but because they lag behind in the surveys, voters are not casting their lot with them. Lacson, for example, is the disciplinarian that we sorely need. It is the lack of discipline, the anarchy and the corruption that are the root of all our problems. Lacson has shown, while he was PNP chief, that he can impose discipline.**

**Brother Eddie's moral regeneration thrust, and trust in his honesty, we also need. His expressed ideas on governance also sound sensible. But he is lagging so far behind in the surveys that he loses more potential votes every time a polling firm releases the results of its survey.**

**We regulate political advertising and commercials to "level the playing field." But surveys are a more potent form of advertising that make the playing field very uneven, and yet we are not regulating them. Other countries do. Why don't we?**

# Reputations

**There's the Rub**

*Conrado de Quiros*

A JAPANESE journalist from Tokyo told me this story: Her father was in the diplomatic service and they moved a lot when she was a kid. She herself grew up in New York, coming back to Japan only when she was 13. Her first language was English, which she speaks to this day with an American accent. She had a hard time speaking Japanese when they moved back to Japan. Though it was the language spoken at home even when they lived in New York, she didn't pick it up that well. So she had to learn the language almost from scratch when she came back. Even now, she says, she sometimes gropes for the right word in Japanese.

But that is not her story. Her story is that when she was in Greece many years ago, an American woman heard her talking in English, and seeing that she was Japanese came up to her and wondered if she could fix her (the American woman's) camera. She was taken aback but swiftly regained her composure. She figured with no small amount of amusement that Japanese honor was at stake. Who knows, if she failed to fix it she would constitute living proof that Japanese technological expertise was on the decline. Yes, it was a Japanese camera, a Canon. For some reason, its carrier presumed it carried a warranty for substitute parts and repair guaranteed by every Japanese citizen.

My friend bravely took on the daunting task. To her relief, the problem turned out to be a simple one. The spool of film had gotten unhooked from the spindle and wouldn't roll. She made a big show about analyzing the situation, with judicious shakes and nods of the head, and as though with strenuous effort slid the roll of film back in place. She gave back the camera to the American tourist with a bow and a few words of broken English. The tourist after a few clicks of the camera was deeply impressed and thanked her profusely.

When my friend told this story to her American friends, they were deeply embarrassed and apologized profusely for their compatriot. She laughed contentedly.

Filipinos have their own reputations abroad, some good, some bad. I still remember the editor of an Arab newspaper telling me that in some parts of Saudi Arabia, cops have started taking bribes on the street. They rarely did that before, but it had spread like an epidemic over the last few years. The source of the virus appeared to be the Filipinos, a thriving community, who had applied their enormous persuasive skills to making the traffic cops look the other way, or the opposite direction of Mecca.

Last week, an official of the EU Commission told me how he found it so easy to deal with Filipinos. Filipinos, he said, were talented, trustworthy and easy to get along with. He himself had had a Filipino maid for some time. He met her in Hong Kong where he and his family had lived for many years, and his family became so dependent on her they brought her along to Japan when they moved there. Which proved to be a considerable social leap upward for the maid. My friend went on to pepper his story with unsavory comments about how Hong Kong was treating the Filipino maids, confining their social engagements to a tiny square where they flocked on Sundays.

I told my friend that the Filipino reputation abroad for being quality service providers wasn't exactly a huge source of pride for the country. He started to apologize, but I said it was completely all right. The export of human labor, which has probably overtaken agricultural products as the country's chief trade item, was the one thing that was keeping the Philippines afloat. No maids, no caretakers, no nurses, no Juan de la Cruz.

Everyone to a man or woman spoke of the many virtues of the Filipinos, and not entirely out of politeness. That went with much head-shaking questions about what was ailing the country. To have such a people with such enviable capabilities but to have fallen to such unenviable straits, it did not make sense. I confessed I did not know the answers, although I suspected the fact that all those talents were being put at the service of the world rather than (directly) of the country might be one of them, if it wasn't the source of the predicament itself.

The artistic talents of Filipinos particularly got rave reviews. It wasn't just in popular music Filipinos excelled in, it was in graphic arts as well. One Singaporean editor told me his paper had several Filipino cartoonists and illustrators, and the quality of their work had brought his paper much prestige and many awards. He wouldn't part with them for all the world, he said, though he wouldn't say that to them or they might immediately ask for a raise. Other Singaporean newspapers had Filipinos as well. I said I knew a couple of them, though most of the graphic artists I knew were in Hong Kong.

There was one other quality Filipinos had, my Singaporean friend said emphatically, addressing himself to the men and women in our company over sake in a dive in Fukuoka on a cold night. It was that, man or woman, Filipinos were exceptionally charming. They laughed a lot, and made friends easily. If you don't watch out, he told the others, you'd lose your boyfriends or girlfriends to them. Or you'd end up being their boyfriend or girlfriend. One Filipino man in fact became the subject of a recent scandal in Singapore, as two well-known Singaporean women fought for his affections.

Filipinos are very articulate as well, one Thai woman told me. You notice, she said, that they're the ones who're very active in conferences, along with the Indians.

Good question: Given the talent, what in God's name has happened to us? The only thing worse than being poor all your life is being rich once and now being abjectly miserable. That's the thing that truly cuts to the quick.

# The tide has turned

**ANALYSIS**

*Amando Doronila*

THE STALEMATED presidential campaign entered a dramatic turning point following the Holy Week holidays. Two events set the scene for the turn of the tide: the withdrawal by Raul Roco from the campaign and the release of Pulse Asia's survey showing President Macapagal-Arroyo breaking away from a two-month tie with Fernando Poe Jr. and pulling ahead with a three-point lead.

These two events had an electric impact on the campaign. Roco's departure for the United States for medical treatment of a "debilitating" illness had a devastating effect on his camp and on the opposition coalition. It sowed demoralization among Roco's followers, and deepened the gloom in the opposition coalition led by Poe, already reeling from the survey which showed that the tide had changed and that he was swimming against a strong current that was pulling him into deeper waters. These two developments confirm decisively that the election has narrowed into a two-horse race.

Unless a spectacular event or a disastrous event intervenes in the next three weeks, the logic of events points to the President building up momentum from the breakthrough. Given that Poe has been losing rather than gaining ground in the surveys, the odds are stacked against Poe staging a dramatic reversal of fortune.

Already in the wake of these developments, two contrasting moods now prevail in the administration and the opposition ranks. Administration circles are in a euphoric mood, scenting victory, while the smell of defeat hovers over the opposition camp. Even among members of the media, which in the earlier stages of the campaign did not give the President a chance against a Poe "tsunami," I can see more of them predicting a Macapagal "landslide." This euphoric mood can be contagious and can only fuel further momentum to the President's home-stretch drive. The post-Lenten reorganization of the Poe campaign apparatus, in which Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay took over as the opposition's campaign manager from a gaggle of managers, did more than anything else to highlight the disintegration of the Poe machine.

Despite Roco's bold protestations that he is not withdrawing from the campaign and that his party will "continue to fight" in his absence, his Coalition of Hope has been left in disarray and leaderless. After the surveys that saw his ratings sliding, it was only a matter of time before he threw in the towel. His illness provided him a face-saving exit.

Roco's fighting words did not allow him to withdraw in a blaze of glory. Ignominious is the fact that he quit without telling those who have seen him as an alternative of hope between the President and Poe. His withdrawal has set up his supporters for raids from either the side of the President or of Poe. They are up for grabs, free to arrange their own alliances. By leaving his supporters without guidance on choices, Roco virtually left them to fend for themselves.

His departure statement sounded fatuous. "There's nothing that you will miss, except that I will not be there," Roco said. "In the campaigns (one) should not have to be physically present always....Hope is in the hearts and in the minds of people, that will never die. When we allow it to die, the country dies." Taking a parting shot at the President, Roco said the country was "on its knees," and "We are suffering. Choose your best leader."

This is a cop-out. With that statement, Roco showed that he lacks the capacity to provide leadership during confused times.

Indeed, negotiations are now under way between emissaries of either camp and Roco's leaders. I don't believe that Roco was paid off to withdraw. His withdrawal calls to mind the withdrawal of Rogelio dela Rosa from the three-cornered 1961 election among him and then Vice President Diosdado Macapagal (Liberal Party) and President Carlos Garcia (Nacionalista Party). Dela Rosa's candidacy was cutting into Macapagal's vote. His withdrawal ensured Macapagal's victory.

Roco's exit now increases the pressure on Sen. Panfilo Lacson to quit and merge forces with the Poe faction of the opposition. In the latest Pulse Asia survey, Lacson polled 10 percent, behind Roco's 12 percent. There is more reason for the Macapagal camp to woo the Roco voters composed mainly of middle and upper classes, a constituency where the President is strong.

Roco's exit and the Macapagal gain in the surveys have served to crystallize alignments as the campaign enters its final lap. The Makati business community came close to endorsing the President. Ricardo Romulo, chair of the Makati Business Club, noted that "with the latest developments, there are only two candidates." He said "one candidate wants to lead the country because his heart is in the right place and it seems all he has to offer. The other candidate stakes her claim on the basis of her track record, which speaks for itself and needs no embellishment from me." He then added that "businessmen always worry about instability. When (the survey) came out, the peso gained quite a bit."

The President spoke on Wednesday at the last presidential candidates series of seven big business groups at the Hotel Intercontinental, where she intensified her campaign offensive. Amid cheers from the businessmen, the President defined the issue between her and her opponent. She said, "In these challenging times, the country has a clear choice between two candidates: to move forward with an experienced hands-on leader who has a specific platform for change or take the risk with an inexperienced actor who is still reliant on advisers to make important decisions."

# 'Show biz na show biz'

**AT LARGE**

*Rina Jimenez-David*

IN THIS campaign season that seems strangely devoid of excitement, about the most exciting thing that's happened in the presidential race is the recent departure of Raul Roco for Texas for medical treatment.

Of course, minutes after Roco announced his leave of absence from the campaign, people were already speculating on the "real" reason for his leaving: it was a face-saving exit from a campaign that he now saw as doomed, his principal financial backer had turned off the faucet and there was no longer any money to continue his quest, it was his way of preventing a win for FPJ, with his share of the votes going to GMA.

For all we know, all the above could be true. Or, his back may truly be killing him (not literally, of course).

But the doomsayers are right. The standard-bearer does not abandon a national campaign one month before elections and expect to win. In fact, it's the last days before the voting, and the first few days of the counting, that are crucial, as the contest could turn at any minute.

Remember the "raid" at the Batasan premises a few weeks before the 1992 elections, where campaign materials for then Speaker Ramon Mitra were supposedly being illegally printed? Hard to believe, but the resulting publicity proved to be the final straw and Mitra, despite his party's vaunted machinery, went on to bitter retirement.

On a smaller scale, a cousin of mine once ran for councilor in a southern Metro Manila city and on the first day of counting emerged as "No. 1" among the councilors-to-be. But he had to leave for the United States the day after to attend his parents' golden wedding anniversary. What do you know, by the time he got back, he had fallen off the winners' list!

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**WHILE all of Roco's opponents made the proper noises about praying for a speedy recovery, one of them made the extra effort to drop by Roco's house to pray "with and for him."**

**Of course, "Brother" Eddie Villanueva made his name as an evangelical preacher, so the "laying of hands" was all part of the job, so to speak. But I thought that this act of commiseration, even if it's all part and parcel of politics and religious obligation, seemed a most civil and gentlemanly act, on the part of both giver and recipient.**

**Either one of them could have made the event a spectacle or an embarrassment. Roco could have refused the gesture since Villanueva would be gaining publicity mileage at his expense. And Brother Eddie could have milked it to extremes. True, Villanueva was interviewed live on a late-night news show after the prayer session, but he seemed subdued and thoughtful, when he could have been triumphant and boastful.**

**At this point in the campaign, though the three runners-up continue to proclaim their belief in victory and disbelief in surveys, there seems little chance of a miracle win for either Roco or Villanueva. But that small gesture, and the dignity with which both conducted themselves, boosted their stock, at least in my eyes.**

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FILIPINOS seem to be more riveted these days by the ongoing "eliminations" in "American Idol" and in its many local copycat versions than in the outcome of the elections.

And who can blame them? The "AI" finalists are better looking and are certainly far superior singers. And we know, at least, that the "AI" finalists have made it to where they are because of genuine talent, besting a field of thousands. Though I must say it mustn't have been so hard to beat the likes of William "She-bangs" Hung.

In contrast, what do we know of our candidates? On what do we base our choices? A few minutes of impassioned spiels? Skillfully crafted radio and TV commercials? Deceptive claims of accomplishment and distinguished service to the nation?

Going by the latest results of the Pulse Asia survey on candidates for the Senate, it seems comparisons with "American Idol" and other talent searches aren't too far off the mark. In the Senate campaign, media exposure and media image seem to be determining factors for victory. *Show biz na show biz.*

Mar Roxas tops his astonishing dash up the senatorial ranks by landing at the top of the heap this time. True, his "Mr. Palengke" tag may have given him a unique and memorable image, but what really triggered his remarkable leap to the "Magic 12" was his appearance on "Morning Girls" and the "shy" admission by host Korina Sanchez that she and Mar were an item. Imagine, all it takes is a romantic angle exploited in a single appearance in a morning talk show, and subsequent replays in show biz-oriented and news shows and follow-up stories by the rest of the entertainment media, and you wind up No. 1 among senatorial contenders. Creepy, no?

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**EVEN creepier is the example of Jamby Madrigal, who before this latest survey was not even within sprinting distance of the Top 12. Suddenly, seemingly from out of nowhere, or rather, from 18th place, she's in 10th place, dislodging worthier candidates like Rodolfo Biazon, or Orly Mercado.**

**If victory has a name for Ja-Ja-Ja-Jamby, it's "Juday," the nickname of her prime endorser, soap opera "princess" Judy Ann Santos. So often does Madrigal drop "Juday's" name in her rally appearances that at the end, she has to remind voters to vote for her and not for Juday. But, is it true that Madrigal listed as among her aliases in her certificate of candidacy the name Juday?**

**Check out Jamby's billboards and you'll see Juday's picture looming almost as large as hers. At least Kiko Pangilinan and Ralph Recto are married to Sharon and Vilma, their "secret weapons." What Jamby's doing is borrowing—if not buying—Juday's identity. Which makes me wonder: If she has to borrow someone else's face and name, does Jamby have anything to offer herself?**

# The Chinese in the eyes of a Frenchman

**LOOKING BACK**

*Ambeth R. Ocampo*

THE F4 fever still persists, and this explains why Jerry Yan is still endorsing Bench and Pepsi in billboards all over Manila. I look at their photographs and wonder why they are so popular since they don't look any different from many of today's affluent gym-toned Chinese-Filipino college students. One must admit that there must have been an improvement in the genes somewhere because when you look at postcards and photographs of Chinese and Chinese-Filipinos at the turn of the 20th century, you will agree that people today do look better.

Reading the impressions of the Frenchman Jean Mallat, who visited the Philippines in the 19th century, I was surprised that he actually wrote:

"In general, the Chinese settled in the Philippines are of average height, although in China itself there are many good-looking men...The Chinese inhabiting Manila who have come for the most part from Macao, Chancheo, Nyngo and Canton are very ugly, and this is explained partly by their social position, for these are generally *coulis* (porters) and domestics who come to the Philippines to do business and who send their savings every year to their families. Like all the Chinese of Macao, they speak a little Spanish or Tagal[og]. Their costume is similar to that of coulis of Macao and Canton; this is a kind of overcoat in the form of a blouse, a shirt called *bisia* and wide pants made of white cloth, with very low seat, fastened by a string; sometimes these pants are black or blue."

Times have changed indeed as modern Filipinos are the ones abroad sending their earnings back home. The descendants of the Chinese described by Mallat are probably prosperous merchants today—maybe even tycoons or taipans—who have within the last century intermarried and borne good-looking *mestizo* children.

The Chinese mix has led to some very stunning racial combinations, but in the 19th century Mallat said: "Chinese *mestizos*, that is to say children of Chinese men and Indio women, are often uglier than the Chinese themselves...they have yellowish skin, wide faces, their noses are flat, though less so than the Indios; their eyes are slanted outwards and the transversal diameters form an obtuse angle on the nose; they are lymphatic and beardless..."

Mallat seems to have noticed all the racial mixes possible in the Philippines and goes on in great detail. At one point, he gives the term *tornatra* for children born of Spanish *mestizos* and a Chinese *mestiza*, and even notes that the *mestizo* mix with Negroes and Sepoys from India inhabit a certain street in Pasig. Mallat was not impressed with the looks of Chinese *mestizos* but had this to say of their industry: "Their character is remarkably active; they enrich themselves through business like the Chinese. Economical to the point of avarice, they hardly pay their servants, give them little to eat, and punish them severely even if often these servants are members of their own family. When they go out, they are richly clothed and wear on their shirt brooches of pearls and diamonds, often worth a *talega* (5,000 francs). In *saya* and *tapis*, their wives display no less luxury in their dress than their husbands. In their hands they hold a rosary, and there are many of them who have renounced the Indio costume and dress in European style; they are all Catholics and are found in great numbers in the provinces of Cebu, Iloilo and Samar. Almost all business is in their hands and this is not too much to the liking of the mayor. The Indios have such a great notion of the wealth of *mestizos* that they like to be taken for them, in order to be considered opulent."

Rizal had Chinese blood, but for some reason or another did not want to be associated with Chinese or be mistaken for one. In Spain, he was often called a *Chino*, which made him and some expatriate friends describe themselves as the *Inchics* shortly before they referred to themselves as the Indios Bravos.

One way to tell Chinese men in those days was from the hair, and Rizal actually has a drawing of this in one of his notebooks. Mallat said Chinese, "shaved their heads, leaving only a braided tail and wear a small black cap topped with a red knot. Their shoes are black, rounded at the tip, with thick soles made of paper; they get them ready-made from their country."

The cap and shoes look like the trendy things we get from Shanghai Tang or at best the shoes are what we call "kung-fu" shoes today.

While reading a 19th-century author, one has to try to imagine what is being described, leaving me puzzled as to the extra services of Chinese barbers—these being eye, ear and nose cleaning we do not get from fancy salons and beauty parlors today. I try to imagine the eye cleaning that has the barber moving a small brush over the eyelids and eyeballs to produce a tickling sensation. There is a long fascinating discussion on chopsticks or *sipit*, describing its use and concluding that "these little sticks were invented as a hygienic measure to prevent them from eating too greedily and to force them to take only a small quantity of food at one time."

So much personal bias and (mis)information abound in the primary sources, making a critical reading basic for understanding a work of the past in the present. This is what makes reading history challenging and interesting.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu*

# Weekend markets

**PINOY KASI**

*Michael L. Tan*

THE FIRST weekend market I went to was in a remote town in Mindanao, way back in the 1970s. Fresh out of college, I was doing research on medicinal plants and had reached the town on a Saturday. The Catholic sisters, who were hosting my visit, told me I'd come just in time for the Sunday market, when the "natives" (ethnic minorities) were coming down from the hills with produce and handicrafts.

These special markets fascinated me, and after I went into anthropology, one of the first things I learned to do was to catch a community's market day, with all its opportunities to learn more about the community, from food preferences to the types of household utensils, medicinal plants, as well as the trading patterns and social relationships of different communities and ethnic groups.

There are similar markets in the States and Europe, usually open only on weekends. These were what the French first called *marche aux puces*, which literally meant "market with fleas," referring to open-air markets where second-hand goods were sold, presumably with the jumping creatures. These days the goods don't have the fleas, but the flea market has become an icon of urbanization, a place where someone's junk could become your treasure.

Besides the usual used furniture, gadgets, books, and clothes, many flea markets have become outlets for organic food products. In some cities, Amsterdam in particular, the flea markets have become international bazaars because many of the vendors are migrants, selling food and crafts from their home countries, much like the "natives" I first met in Mindanao's weekend markets.

A few years back I discovered, as have many Filipinos have, Bangkok's Chatuchak (pronounced Jatujak) weekend market, which grew from a few stalls to several hectares now that sell everything, and I mean everything. You can buy silver trinkets by the gram, old coins and stamps, musical instruments, amulets and charms and potions, motorcycle helmets, dogs and cats and more exotic pets, aromatic oils and incense, hundreds of plant varieties, vegetable seeds at P5 a pack, silk scarves from Myanmar and Laos, reproductions of old Chinese calendars and much much more.

Given this long love affair with weekend markets, I was thrilled when I first heard of similar places starting to crop up in Metro Manila. I hear now of markets in Parañaque, Makati, Greenhills and Quezon City. The one I go to is Sidcor, on the corner of Main Avenue and Edsa, open Sunday mornings with ample free parking.

Vegetarians know how frustrating it can be going through our supermarkets, where they try to pass off limp, wilted greens as vegetables. At Sidcor you'll find fresh produce, some from Baguio, including some of the stuff that regular markets rarely sell: *wansoy* (cilantro) for example, mushrooms, as well as seaweeds like *lato* and *guso*. There's also some organic produce—not enough, I have to say, but I have a feeling more vendors will stock such stuff if you keep asking for them. For example, I found only one stall selling upland rice and when I asked them why they only had one variety, they said there just wasn't enough demand.

Sidcor also has a very good selection of fruits, to name a few, several varieties of mangoes from Zambales and Pangasinan, pineapples from Bicol and the juiciest *tatsuma* oranges from Nueva Vizcaya.

Carnivores will also enjoy Sidcor, with fresh fish and seafood, as well as beef, pork and chicken. Yes, they do have native (what Westerners would call free-range) chickens and chicken eggs, as well as some more exotic stuff like *tapang usa* (dried venison), live frogs, eels and stuff, well, which I didn't really want to find out about.

Sidcor also has a large section where plants are sold, with some stalls open all throughout the week. It's paradise here for gardeners, with the stalls offering everything from water lilies to bamboos, herbs (including rosemary, lavender, dill and basil) and fruit trees.

There's much more yet, including clothes, crafts, soaps, household gadgets and tools, and lots of woven baskets, mats, hats. And as with other markets, it pays to be an early bird, going at about 7 a.m., to get the best produce. Look for the couple from Bicol selling pineapples as well as authentic *laing*, Bicol express and *sinantol* (they usually run out by about 10 a.m.).

I'm hoping these weekend markets continue to expand because they offer a healthy alternative to the malls. The rents aren't too high (one vendor said she was paying P600 a day), which means smaller business people have a fighting chance. The vendors are also friendly always ready to strike up a *suki* relationship.

The merchandise in Sidcor tends to be local, with good representation from different regions in Luzon. Many of the products are of very good quality because, like the Mindanao markets I first discovered in the 1970s, they tend to sell stuff from small producers, which means they're more often handcrafted. I still have some of the Tiruray baskets I bought back in the 1970s, even after they've gone through several lives as laundry bins, flower baskets, storage for books and siesta hideaway by puppies and kittens.

I do worry that the weekend markets may go the way of Greenhills' *tiangge* with too many stalls cramped into too little space, and with a lot of stuff dumped from China, so go check your community weekend market while the going's still good. If you notice they're going the way of other *tiangge*, complain to management and try to convince them to keep the businesses small and friendly.

* * *

*Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net*

## THEY SAID

### Missing

"They were shocked. They kept asking, 'Where's the falls?' I could not hide my embarrassment. I had to assure them that not all waterfalls in the country had suffered the same fate."

*—Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon's Jay Lim, describing how he had to explain to barristers from other countries the missing Cristalino Falls in Mt. Banahaw*

### Bad gamble

"Let us not gamble our future away again by experimenting on somebody who is not tried and tested."

*—Former Movie and Television Review and Classification Baord chair Manuel Morato*

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# The tide has turned

**ANALYSIS**

*Amando Doronila*

THE STALEMATED presidential campaign entered a dramatic turning point following the Holy Week holidays. Two events set the scene for the turn of the tide: the withdrawal by Raul Roco from the campaign and the release of Pulse Asia's survey showing President Macapagal-Arroyo breaking away from a two-month tie with Fernando Poe Jr. and pulling ahead with a three-point lead.

These two events had an electric impact on the campaign. Roco's departure for the United States for medical treatment of a "debilitating" illness had a devastating effect on his camp and on the opposition coalition. It sowed demoralization among Roco's followers, and deepened the gloom in the opposition coalition led by Poe, already reeling from the survey which showed that the tide had changed and that he was swimming against a strong current that was pulling him into deeper waters. These two developments confirm decisively that the election has narrowed into a two-horse race.

Unless a spectacular event or a disastrous event intervenes in the next three weeks, the logic of events points to the President building up momentum from the breakthrough. Given that Poe has been losing rather than gaining ground in the surveys, the odds are stacked against Poe staging a dramatic reversal of fortune.

Already in the wake of these developments, two contrasting moods now prevail in the administration and the opposition ranks. Administration circles are in a euphoric mood, scenting victory, while the smell of defeat hovers over the opposition camp. Even among members of the media, which in the earlier stages of the campaign did not give the President a chance against a Poe "tsunami," I can see more of them predicting a Macapagal "landslide." This euphoric mood can be contagious and can only fuel further momentum to the President's home-stretch drive. The post-Lenten reorganization of the Poe campaign apparatus, in which Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay took over as the opposition's campaign manager from a gaggle of managers, did more than anything else to highlight the disintegration of the Poe machine.

Despite Roco's bold protestations that he is not withdrawing from the campaign and that his party will "continue to fight" in his absence, his Coalition of Hope has been left in disarray and leaderless. After the surveys that saw his ratings sliding, it was only a matter of time before he threw in the towel. His illness provided him a face-saving exit.

Roco's fighting words did not allow him to withdraw in a blaze of glory. Ignominious is the fact that he quit without telling those who have seen him as an alternative of hope between the President and Poe. His withdrawal has set up his supporters for raids from either the side of the President or of Poe. They are up for grabs, free to arrange their own alliances. By leaving his supporters without guidance on choices, Roco virtually left them to fend for themselves.

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Indeed, negotiations are now under way between emissaries of either camp and Roco's leaders. I don't believe that Roco was paid off to withdraw. His withdrawal calls to mind the withdrawal of Rogelio dela Rosa from the three-cornered 1961 election among him and then Vice President Diosdado Macapagal (Liberal Party) and President Carlos Garcia (Nacionalista Party). Dela Rosa's candidacy was cutting into Macapagal's vote. His withdrawal ensured Macapagal's victory.

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For all we know, all the above could be true. Or, his back may truly be killing him (not literally, of course).

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THE F4 fever still persists, and this explains why Jerry Yan is still endorsing Bench and Pepsi in billboards all over Manila. I look at their photographs and wonder why they are so popular since they don't look any different from many of today's affluent gym-toned Chinese-Filipino college students. One must admit that there must have been an improvement in the genes somewhere because when you look at postcards and photographs of Chinese and Chinese-Filipinos at the turn of the 20th century, you will agree that people today do look better.

Reading the impressions of the Frenchman Jean Mallat, who visited the Philippines in the 19th century, I was surprised that he actually wrote:

"In general, the Chinese settled in the Philippines are of average height, although in China itself there are many good-looking men.. The Chinese inhabiting Manila who have come for the most part from Macao, Chancheo, Nyngo and Canton are very ugly, and this is explained partly by their social position, for these are generally *coulis* (porters) and domestics who come to the Philippines to do business and who send their savings every year to their families. Like all the Chinese of Macao, they speak a little Spanish or Tagal[og]. Their costume is similar to that of coulis of Macao and Canton; this is a kind of overcoat in the form of a blouse, a shirt called *bisia* and wide pants made of white cloth, with very low seat, fastened by a string, sometimes these pants are black or blue."

Times have changed indeed as modern Filipinos are the ones abroad sending their earnings back home. The descendants of the Chinese described by Mallat are probably prosperous merchants today—maybe even tycoons or taipans—who have within the last century intermarried and borne good-looking *mestizo* children.

The Chinese mix has led to some very stunning racial combinations, but in the 19th century Mallat said: "Chinese *mestizo*, that is to say children of Chinese men and Indio women, are often uglier than the Chinese themselves...they have yellowish skin, wide faces, their noses are flat, though less so than the Indios; their eyes are slanted outwards and the transversal diameters form an obtuse angle on the nose; they are lymphatic and beardless..."

Mallat seems to have noticed all the racial mixes possible in the Philippines and goes on in great detail. At one point, he gives the term *tornatra* for children born of Spanish *mestizos* and a Chinese *mestiza*, and even notes that the *mestizo* mix with Negroes and Sepoys from India inhabit a certain street in Pasig. Mallat was not impressed with the looks of Chinese *mestizos* but had this to say of their industry: "Their character is remarkably active; they enrich themselves through business like the Chinese. Economical to the point of avarice, they hardly pay their servants, give them little to eat, and punish them severely even if often these servants are members of their own family. When they go out, they are richly clothed and wear on their shirt brooches of pearls and diamonds, often worth a *talega* (5,000 francs). In *saya* and *tapis*, their wives display no less luxury in their dress than their husbands. In their hands they hold a rosary, and there are many of them who have renounced the Indio costume and dress in European style; they are all Catholics and are found in great numbers in the provinces of Cebu, Iloilo and Samar. Almost all business is in their hands and this is not too much to the liking of the mayor. The Indios have such a great notion of the wealth of *mestizos* that they like to be taken for them, in order to be considered opulent."

Rizal had Chinese blood, but for some reason or another did not want to be associated with Chinese or be mistaken for one. In Spain, he was often called a *Chino*, which made him and some expatriate friends describe themselves as the *Inchics* shortly before they referred to themselves as the Indios Bravos.

One way to tell Chinese men in those days was from the hair, and Rizal actually has a drawing of this in one of his notebooks. Mallat said Chinese, "shaved their heads, leaving only a braided tail and wear a small black cap topped with a red knot. Their shoes are black, rounded at the tip, with thick soles made of paper; they get them ready-made from their country."

The cap and shoes look like the trendy things we get from Shanghai Tang or at best the shoes are what we call "kung-fu" shoes today.

While reading a 19th-century author, one has to try to imagine what is being described, leaving me puzzled as to the extra services of Chinese barbers—these being eye, ear and nose cleaning we do not get from fancy salons and beauty parlors today. I try to imagine the eye cleaning that has the barber moving a small brush over the eyelids and eyeballs to produce a tickling sensation. There is a long fascinating discussion on chopsticks or *sipit*, describing its use and concluding that "these little sticks were invented as a hygienic measure to prevent them from eating too greedily and to force them to take only a small quantity of food at one time."

So much personal bias and (mis)information abound in the primary sources, making a critical reading basic for understanding a work of the past in the present. This is what makes reading history challenging and interesting.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu*

# Weekend markets

**PINOY KASI**

*Michael L. Tan*

THE FIRST weekend market I went to was in a remote town in Mindanao, way back in the 1970s. Fresh out of college, I was doing research on medicinal plants and had reached the town on a Saturday. The Catholic sisters, who were hosting my visit, told me I'd come just in time for the Sunday market, when the "natives" (ethnic minorities) were coming down from the hills with produce and handicrafts.

These special markets fascinated me, and after I went into anthropology, one of the first things I learned to do was to catch a community's market day, with all its opportunities to learn more about the community, from food preferences to the types of household utensils, medicinal plants, as well as the trading patterns and social relationships of different communities and ethnic groups.

There are similar markets in the States and Europe, usually open only on weekends. These were what the French first called *marche aux puces*, which literally meant "market with fleas," referring to open-air markets where second-hand goods were sold, presumably with the jumping creatures. These days the goods don't have the fleas, but the flea market has become an icon of urbanization, a place where someone's junk could become your treasure.

Besides the usual used furniture, gadgets, books and clothes, many flea markets have become outlets for organic food products. In some cities, Amsterdam in particular, the flea markets have become international bazaars because many of the vendors are migrants, selling food and crafts from their home countries, much like the "natives" I first met in Mindanao's weekend markets.

A few years back I discovered, as have many Filipinos have, Bangkok's Chatuchak (pronounced Jatujak) weekend market, which grew from a few stalls to several hectares now that sell everything, and I mean everything. You can buy silver trinkets by the gram, old coins and stamps, musical instruments, amulets and charms and potions, motorcycle helmets, dogs and cats and more exotic pets, aromatic oils and incense, hundreds of plant varieties, vegetable seeds at P5 a pack, silk scarves from Myanmar and Laos, reproductions of old Chinese calendars and much much more.

Given this long love affair with weekend markets, I was thrilled when I first heard of similar places starting to crop up in Metro Manila. I hear now of markets in Parañaque, Makati, Greenhills and Quezon City. The one I go to is Sidcor, on the corner of Main Avenue and Edsa, open Sunday mornings with ample free parking.

Vegetarians know how frustrating it can be going through our supermarkets, where they try to pass off limp, wilted greens as vegetables. At Sidcor you'll find fresh produce, some from Baguio, including some of the stuff that regular markets rarely sell: *wansoy* (cilantro) for example, mushrooms, as well as seaweeds like *lato* and *guso*. There's also some organic produce—not enough, I have to say, but I have a feeling more vendors will stock such stuff if you keep asking for them. For example, I found only one stall selling upland rice and when I asked them why they only had one variety, they said there just wasn't enough demand.

Sidcor also has a very good selection of fruits, to name a few, several varieties of mangoes from Zambales and Pangasinan, pineapples from Bicol and the juiciest *tatsuma* oranges from Nueva Vizcaya.

Carnivores will also enjoy Sidcor, with fresh fish and seafood, as well as beef, pork and chicken. Yes, they do have native (what Westerners would call free-range) chickens and chicken eggs, as well as some more exotic stuff like *tapang usa* (dried venison), live frogs, eels and stuff, well, which I didn't really want to find out about.

Sidcor also has a large section where plants are sold, with some stalls open all throughout the week. It's paradise here for gardeners, with the stalls offering everything from water lilies to bamboos, herbs (including rosemary, lavender, dill and basil) and fruit trees.

There's much more yet, including clothes, crafts, soaps, household gadgets and tools, and lots of woven baskets, mats, hats. And as with other markets, it pays to be an early bird, going at about 7 a.m., to get the best produce. Look for the couple from Bicol selling pineapples as well as authentic *laing*, Bicol express and *sinantol* (they usually run out by about 10 a.m.).

I'm hoping these weekend markets continue to expand because they offer a healthy alternative to the malls. The rents aren't too high (one vendor said she was paying P600 a day), which means smaller business people have a fighting chance. The vendors are also friendly always ready to strike up a *suki* relationship.

The merchandise in Sidcor tends to be local, with good representation from different regions in Luzon. Many of the products are of very good quality because, like the Mindanao markets I first discovered in the 1970s, they tend to sell stuff from small producers, which means they're more often handcrafted. I still have some of the Tiruray baskets I bought back in the 1970s, even after they've gone through several lives as laundry bins, flower baskets, storage for books and siesta hideaway by puppies and kittens.

I do worry that the weekend markets may go the way of Greenhills' *tiangge* with too many stalls cramped into too little space, and with a lot of stuff dumped from China, so go check your community weekend market while the going's still good. If you notice they're going the way of other *tiangge*, complain to management and try to convince them to keep the businesses small and friendly.

* * *

*Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net*

## THEY SAID

### Missing

"They were shocked. They kept asking, 'Where's the falls?' I could not hide my embarrassment. I had to assure them that not all waterfalls in the country had suffered the same fate."

*—Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon's Jay Lim, describing how he had to explain to barristers from other countries the missing Cristalino Falls in Mt. Banahaw*

### Bad gamble

"Let us not gamble our future away again by experimenting on somebody who is not tried and tested."

*—Former Movie and Television Review and Classification Board chair Manuel Morato*

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Interestingly, overseas Filipino contract workers in the Middle East and Hong Kong have been declared "heroes" of the Philippine economy, while doctors who leave our shores for better opportunities are denounced as "selfish and unpatriotic." This may be too harsh a judgment.

A number of educators of this country have also sacrificed their profession to become domestic helpers abroad. The primary reason: financial difficulties.

The reason for the career shift from MD-Philippines to RN-abroad is obviously similar, although not as humbling. For some of our colleagues, it is the answer to the financial woes and unstable future confronting their families. Some of them are very positive that this job will also serve as an entry point and stepping stone to later serving as physician assistants or licensed doctors abroad.

And there is the big issue of buying stocks in the big hospitals to obtain the privilege to practice. Lucky are those who have wealthy parents or spouses who can provide the millions of pesos to buy this privilege. How about those who are in the middle and lower income-class sector? Some may violently object to this statement, but financial capability indeed plays a major factor over good credentials and clinical skills at least in the first few years of clinical practice. Is the medical community actually a microcosm of Philippine society? A few doctors who have left were bold enough to cite local hospital politics, professional jealousy, the "my turf" concept, and greed as the "last straw that broke the camel's back."

There are also fears of increasing malpractice suits and the need of compulsory malpractice insurance, likely consequences of the Medical Malpractice Bill, if approved.

And then there's the cost of doctor's consultation and medicines going beyond the reach of Juan dela Cruz. For developing countries, the World Health Organization recommends the allotment of 5 percent of the Gross National Product to health care programs. But the government's annual health budget is only 3.5 percent of our GNP. Is our government partly to blame for this exodus?

**—ATENODORO R. RUIZ JR., M.D.**
**Unit 2201-2203, 22nd floor**
**One San Miguel Avenue**
**Condominium,**
**San Miguel Avenue cor.**
**Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

## When self-righteous act becomes selfish

I HAVE a lot of respect for Rina Jimenez-David and I regret having to disagree with her in connection with her piece "The President and the fear of a Fernando Poe victory" which came out last March 27.

David decried the fact that many conscience votes are going to the incumbent President even if she is not the real choice of voters simply because they want to prevent Poe from ascending to the presidency.

She suggested that it is more important that people speak out and "if Poe wins because we spoke out... so be it. Perhaps we need one last fatal blow before we can all rise to be the great nation we have dreamed to be."

Having read from her own column that David was a Maryknoll girl who came from a bourgeois background, and presuming that she has maintained, if not bettered, her circumstances by her own endeavors, I feel she may be seeing the national situation from a different point of view.

There are millions of Filipinos already on the brink of starvation and the perceived national disaster and economic collapse that will result from a Poe victory could literally be the "one last fatal blow" for them. Probably David can survive a Poe presidency, but many of our countrymen, most particularly the very ones supporting him, will not.

There are times when holding steadfast to one's conscience and standing by principle are not always heroic or moral—particularly when so many others may suffer because a few, or many, decide to play Don Quixote. In those instances, the supposedly idealistic and righteous act becomes selfish and irresponsible, despite the best intentions behind it.

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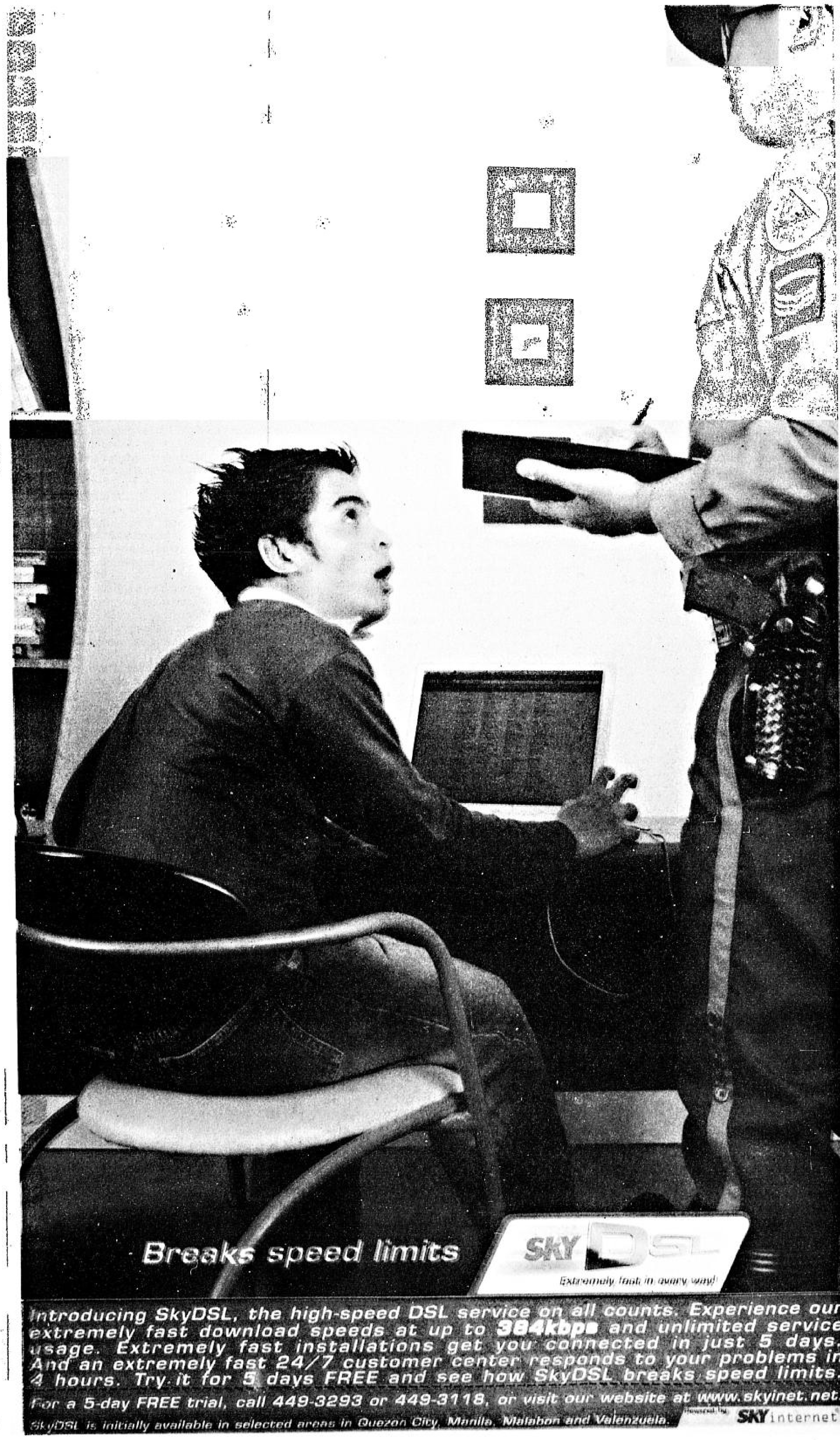

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SkyDSL is initially available in selected areas in Quezon City, Manila, Malabon and Valenzuela.

## Still with Lakas

I WOULD like to call your attention to the news item that appeared in your paper's March 30, 2004 issue where you mentioned my name as one of those congressmen who attended the meeting of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino at Club Filipino in San Juan last March 29.

Please be informed that I never was in that meeting. Neither do I have the intention of bolting the Lakas-CMD Party to join the KNP as incorrectly stated in the article.

As one of the organizers of the then Lakas-NUCD Party (now Lakas-CMD), Sorsogon chapter, I have never wavered in my belief and commitment to my party, its policies and platform of government.

**—REP. JOSE G. SOLIS,**
**Second District, Sorsogon**

## Rising prices

POLITICAL mudslinging among presidential candidates in 2004 has been media fare from the very day they declared their intention to run in the 2004 elections for the highest office of the land.

Amid the senseless political ruckus, the basic issues of the poor, the high prices of basic commodities, among them, have been largely forgotten.

Candidates, especially the presidential hopefuls, have relegated these issues as secondary. They would rather talk about their rivals' alleged corrupt activities, unexplained wealth, intellectual deficit and immoralities but keep silent on issues that directly affect the masses.

The workers, who comprise the majority of poor consumers, would like to know if the presidential candidates offer alternatives to the current price policies being maintained and tolerated by the Macapagal administration. We call on them to support the establishment of a price control and discount system to cover prime commodities.

The series of price hikes involving basic needs—transportation, pork, chicken, including the lowly *galunggong*—is aggravating the already abject condition of the poor.

Data from the Department of Trade and Industry show that the price of flour, a prime ingredient for making *pandesal*, the bread of the *masa*, increased from P510/25 kg/bag to P525. Coffee price has also gone up from P25/50 gm to P26. The DTI also says that the prices of canned goods, like sardines, didn't increase but the actual market show otherwise. Liquefied petroleum gas or LPG now costs P330, pushing some of the poor to go back to the nomadic and traditional way of "*gatong*" for cooking.

Electricity and water rates keep rising. Energy Secretary Vincent Perez recently warned that another round of power rate hikes will be imposed "after 40 days" or after the May elections. This, Perez claimed, would result from the lifting of the 40-centavo cap per kWh on the purchased power cost adjustment of the government-managed Napocor, which was imposed two years ago by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo. A case of PPA "*bigay-bawi.*" On the water issue, the Freedom from Debt Coalition said that after the government has adopted a privatization policy on water services, water hikes have become rampant and burdensome to water consumers.

We do not need to be a mathematician to estimate how these price increases punish the poor. Nevertheless, the Macapagal administration shares a significant portion of the blame. GMA, just like her predecessors, has a rehashed script calling on the people to tighten their belts. But the belts of the poor are past their final holes.

Workers should not vote for candidates who ignore the call for price controls and price discounts.

**—REP. RENE MAGTUBO,**
**Partido ng Manggagawa,**
**34 Road 3, Project 6, Quezon City**

*IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph*

*Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.*

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# Behind Dr. Emil Jacinto's decision to become a nurse

## LETTERS

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# Roco men: We do not call rivals, they call us

From page A1

Chavez disclosed that Lacson's ally, Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino, made a formal offer to him on TV Wednesday night to switch to their side.

"I am elated, flattered, that I'm being considered. But I am not in a situation where I have to make the decision. I welcome the offer, but for me to make the call to any political party [is a no-no]," Chavez said.

Perfecto Yasay Jr. said he had also received similar calls from the administration camp, but had rebuffed them.

Earlier, Hermie Aquino dismissed Lacson's claim that Promdi's Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, one of the Alyansa leaders, had spoken with Lacson strategist Lito Banayo for a possible merger of forces.

But in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte, an angry Lacson accused Osmeña of demanding money in exchange for the supposed merger.

He denied Osmeña's earlier remark that his camp was wooing Roco's supporters. "No one among us is wooing anybody," he said.

Lacson also said his camp already knew of Roco's withdrawal from the campaign as early as the Lenten break because of the two meetings Osmeña allegedly initiated and had with Banayo and Butz Aquino, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino secretary general.

## His father's son

Roco's 29-year-old son Rex yesterday donned floral shirt, red vest and hat to lead the Alyansa motorcade in the eastern part of Metro Manila.

Rex took his father's place inside the Alyansa's official campaign car, a white Mitsubishi Pajero, beside Aquino.

He flashed the "I love you" sign from the sun roof of the SUV, very much like the way his father did, as the ticket's convoy of cars motored through the cities of Marikina and Pasig.

"He moves like his father; he must have imbibed his father's gestures by osmosis," observed one of Roco's staff writers during the motorcade.

At around the same time, the Alyansa ticket and members of Women for Roco fanned out and held motorcades in other parts of the metropolis.

"As you can see, we are very, very strong for now. The sortie is just to show that the fight continues," the soft-spoken Rex, a restaurant manager and former ramp model, said in a press briefing after the morning motorcade. "My father is coming back."

He dismissed speculation that Roco votes were now being claimed by the other presidential candidates, saying: "Let's just wait and see. When [my father] comes back, we'll have a different story."

## Instructions

Rex's campaigning is not a personal decision but is part of his father's instructions, according to Jaime Galvez-Tan, Roco's campaign adviser.

"Don't be my spokesperson. Tell what's in your heart as a son of Roco," Galvez-Tan recalled the father as advising his sons before he flew to the United States.

Roco himself was in "high spirits" when he checked in at a hospital in Houston, Texas, shortly after his arrival there, according to his younger brother, Facundo.

"I just talked to Raul and he is in high spirits," Facundo said yesterday. "He arrived in Honolulu [Wednesday] night and later in Houston, where he checked in at a hospital. Maybe [Friday] or Saturday, we may issue a medical bulletin."

## Wake-up call

Rex, the fifth of six children who had joined his father's campaign sorties in the past weeks and in previous elections, said he felt "privileged" in joining Aquino and the senatorial slate in the campaign.

"It's more exciting," he said.

Later, his elder brother Raul Jr. joined the briefing and shrugged off speculations that Roco was very ill and was withdrawing from the race.

"It doesn't bother us," Raul Jr. said, adding: "We do it [campaigning] honorably... This comes from our freedom of will."

Asked if his father's departure could serve as a wake-up call and generate more support from the electorate, he said: "You can look at it from that perspective. The fight of the youth and the women continues. It can be a wake-up call to enlighten the people more."

After their separate motorcades, the candidates and the members of Women for Roco converged at the Robinson's Galleria mall in Pasig for the press briefing. They later attended the noon Mass at the nearby Edsa Shrine to pray for Roco's speedy recovery.

Aquino, who has become the ticket's chief campaigner in Roco's absence, said the candidates' decision to hold separate motorcades for the first time was part of the strategy.

He added: "It was not effective when all of us were together. We will be able to cover more ground and more people if we fan out. The volunteers for Roco are moving. The Women for Roco are moving. The youth, the candidates, lawyers, we're fanning out."

But the ticket will not employ a similar strategy all the time, Aquino said.

"There is value in branching out, but that doesn't mean we will always branch out. At times, we will consolidate our efforts," he said.

## Expected

Aquino said the reported defections of some local supporters to rival parties following Roco's departure were "expected."

"But you know, election day is still 25 days away, and even if people are siding with this or with that candidate today, tomorrow may be a different story. And come May 10, it will definitely be a different story," he said, adding:

"We expected this kind of reaction in the first place, including the wave of disinformation. That's just something we have to live with, something that we have to overcome in the next few days."

## Not lose heart

Aquino said Alyansa supporters should not lose heart, but draw inspiration from the ticket's decision to press ahead with the campaign.

"We're going out on sorties, motorcades, and we're showing them that the fight is far from over. So when they get to hear of this, they themselves are emboldened. We encourage them to carry out their own plans, mass actions. It's part of the whole process," he said. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

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# Bayan cites high survey rating to debunk Red tag

By Philip C. Tubeza

BAYAN Muna's top ranking in the recent Pulse Asia Survey should disprove allegations by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales that the paryt-list group had links with the communist New People's Army (NPA).

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo made the statement as he and fellow Reps. Crispin Beltran and Liza Maza filed yesterday a P9.8-million libel suit against Gonzales with the Department of Justice for "defamatory and libelous" accusations that they had diverted congressional funds to the NPA.

Beltran is now running under the Anakpawis party-list group while Liza Maza is with Gabriela Women's Party, which are sister party-list groups of Bayan Muna. Gonzales wanted the two groups and Bayan Muna disqualified for their alleged links with the communist rebels.

But Ocampo said that Bayan Muna had consistently topped party-list surveys and, despite Gonzales' accusation, the Pulse Asia survey from March 27 to April 24 showed that it continued to get high poll ratings.

He added that Anakpawis and Gabriela also made it to the top five choices of registered voters.

The latest survey by Pulse Asia was made after Gonzales came out with his accusations against Bayan Muna and its allies.

"Sorry for Bert Gonzales. You can cry your heart out but (we're still on top)," Ocampo said.

Ocampo, a former member of the National Democratic Front panel in the peace talks with the Aquino administration in 1986, said the popularity of Bayan Muna and its allies was the reason Gonzales and the military were trying to link them to the NPA.

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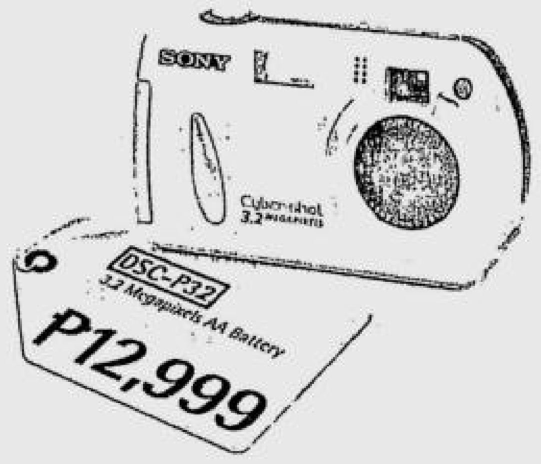

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## Isabela gov condemns bus burning by NPA rebels

CAMP MELCHOR DE LA CRUZ, Gamu, Isabela—Suspected New People's Army rebels burned a Metro Manila-bound bus in Jones, Isabela, on Wednesday night, earning the ire of provincial officials.

In a statement, Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. condemned the bus burning.

"It is unfortunate that certain elements in our society still prefer to create trouble and bring hardship to our people instead of finding ways to help uplift the condition of our suffering people," his statement said.

"I cannot understand why some people, instead of sitting down to discuss and resolve problems resort to violence that harm ordinary people," he added.

Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Alcasid, commander of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, said the rebels did not hurt any of the 35 passengers of the Victory Liner bus.

Alcasid said their reports indicated that the rebels, who are members of the NPA's Benito Tesorio Front operating in the area, burned the bus after its owners refused to pay "revolutionary taxes."

Reports said the bus came from its terminal in San Agustin town and fetched passengers in Jones.

Two rebels, posing as passengers, boarded the bus when it reached the Jones public market at about 8 p.m. About 200 meters away, another suspected rebel boarded the bus.

### Guns

When the bus reached Barangay Payak in Jones, the three men and two others who boarded the bus in that village took out their M-14 and M-16 Armalite rifles and handguns.

Alcasid said the rebels ordered driver Ferdinand Fluragua and conductor Reynaldo Javier to stop the bus and allow the 35 passengers to take their belongings and alight.

The rebels later ordered Fluragua to drive for about 200 meters to a road leading to Barangay San Felipe, a known route that communist rebels take to the Sierra Madre mountain ranges.

The rebels, after asking Fluragua and Javier to alight, poured gasoline on the bus and burned it. They escaped aboard an owner-type jeepney parked in the area.

Dy said he received the report on the bus burning about half an hour after the attack.

He said he ordered an investigation and ordered police and the military to help secure passengers of buses. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

# Reyes vows to uncover tie-up between smugglers, LTO execs

**GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Anti-smuggling czar Secretary Angelo Reyes said an investigation on the involvement of some officials from the Land Transportation Office and Bureau of Customs in the smuggling of imported second hand cars at the Makar Port here would soon start.**

Reyes' statement came in the wake of Tuesday's seizure of at least nine 40-foot container vans containing hot cars from South Korea.

The contents of the container vans were declared as used auto parts.

The cargo arrived in February. Upon inspection after these were unloaded, the customs bureau found that its contents had been misdeclared.

Customs officials notified the consignees of the shipment to present documents so they could claim the cargo but none of them surfaced.

On Tuesday, the 30-day grace period given by the customs bureau lapsed.

"We will run after the people in government who act as conspirators in these smuggling activities," Reyes said.

The involvement of LTO and customs officials came into the picture after it was ascertained that the cars had already been registered with the LTO even before these arrived in the country.

The office that facilitated the cars' registration was the LTO extension office in Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat.

Reyes said the registration has already been cancelled after the seizure of the cars and the official who facilitated the procedure had been relieved of his duties.

But he said the sacking of the official did not put an end to the government's quest to uncover the identities of the other officials involved in the botched smuggling.

Reyes had been appointed head of the government's campaign against smuggling following his successes in the campaign against kidnapping.

Reyes vowed to continue the campaign against kidnapping despite his new task as anti-smuggling czar.

Smuggling had been blamed by groups of sugar planters as one of the reasons for the sharp fall in prices of locally produced sugar. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

## Comelec control sought by bet in Cotabato City

COTABATO CITY—An opposition mayoral candidate here is asking Philippine National Police Dir. Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane and Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos to declare this city under Comelec control.

KNP mayoral candidate Estrellita Juliano also urged the poll body to centralize the counting and canvassing of votes of 15 of the 37 barangays in the city's central district.

Abalos would serve as the commissioner-in-charge for Central Mindanao, including the two ARMM provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur. He would be based in Cotabato City on May 10 to ensure an orderly, honest and credible elections.

But reelectionist Mayor Muslimin Sema downplayed Juliano's request claiming the three criteria posed by the poll body and the PNP in declaring an area under Comelec control were absent.

"There was no election-related incident since the election period began in December," Sema said.

"Beside, candidates have been campaigning peacefully and exchange pleasantries when we meet," he added.

In her letter to Abalos, Juliano, the first woman challenger of Sema, claimed she was a victim of a foiled assassination while campaigning on April 1.

The attempt was foiled when her Army escort shot what she described as her would-be assassin who was later identified as PO3 Danny Mohamad.

But Sema said Mohamad was a police officer assigned with police station 1 and was pursuing a rape suspect at the city's old market area when Juliano's convoy appeared. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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**TOIL**

**The heat of the summer months takes its toll on this balloon vendor who fans himself at the San Pedro Cathedral in Davao City while waiting for buyers.**

## Farmers learn of hybrid rice through radio

**By Tonette Orejas**
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

MAGALANG, Pampanga—Estanislao Baluyot, 65, and Afra Rivera, 52, on Wednesday joined 254 other farmers at the graduation rites of the Pampanga Agricultural College (PAC) here.

But unlike regular PAC students, the farmers first learned their eight-month hybrid rice farming course through the PAC's community radio station.

Baluyot and Rivera said they got information on hybrid rice farming through the broadcasts of dwEE 107.1 FM and while they were out working in the fields.

"I carried my transistor radio to the farm. Even as I worked, I heard the instructors speak on the benefits of hybrid rice and the right ways of planting it. There are also (pieces of) information on modern farming technology," said Baluyot, a resident of Barangay Bical in Mabalacat town.

Rivera, also of Mabalacat, said that while the radio program was already instructional, the succeeding seminars and actual practice supervised by municipal and PAC agriculturists helped her and her classmates to understand the techniques.

PAC calls this project "Go Modern Agriculture School-on-Air," according to station manager Emil Alejandrino. The one-hour program is aired thrice weekly, he said.

Former Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor inaugurated the radio station on July 15, 2002. Tambuli, a non-government organization assisted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), helped set up the station.

The station's broadcasts are heard in eastern Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

Baluyot and Rivera said their harvests and income have more than doubled through hybrid rice varieties. Each tills a hectare of land.

"You only need 20 kilograms of seeds for every hectare," Baluyot said.

The hybrid rice varieties "Bigante" and "Mestizo" are "more resistant to pest, are easier to cultivate and grow fast," said Rivera.

But it is only Rivera who plant hybrid rice in her village of Camachile.

"Farmers stick with what they know. They want proof that the new varieties are going to benefit them," she said.

Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr., the guest of honor during the graduation rites, said 103,000 out of 2.5 million rice farmers in the country are now cultivating hybrid rice.

In 2001, Lorenzo said only about 6,000 hectares were planted to hybrid rice varieties. The Department of Agriculture is targeting to cover 600,000 hectares this year.

## PNP, Comelec prepare for possible unrest after elections

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—Top officials of the Philippine National Police and the Commission on Elections said contingency plans are in place in case civil disturbance erupts after the May 10 elections.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said Comelec and PNP officials have talked about preparations for the possible outbreak of post-election violence "especially now that there are candidates talking of mass fraud" during the elections.

"These candidates are talking of mass fraud and cheating, but for all you know, the agenda here is to lay the basis, to lay the groundwork (for their planned actions) after the election," Abalos told reporters here on Wednesday.

He attended the PNP command conference here, where police security preparations for the May 10 elections were discussed.

### Capability

Abalos, however, discounted the possibility of a "People Power-type" scenario after the elections, claiming that no opposition candidate is capable of doing it.

"Not necessarily People Power mass action. I don't think they are capable of mounting one," he said.

Abalos said Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., PNP chief, and the military have assured him that these issues will be addressed and that they are prepared to handle it.

The Comelec chair said he also advised police officials to be very careful in recommending any area to be placed under Comelec control.

### Virtual martial law

"It is practically declaring martial law when you place areas under Comelec control so we should be very very careful," he said.

When asked what contingency plans are in place, Ebdane said "the plan involves preparations for post-election activities."

"It is not hard for us to reorient the mission of our deployed forces because they are on the ground and they can tackle the civil disturbances that may occur on the ground," he said.

While saying that he does not expect any bloodshed or a People Power-type of mass action after the elections, Ebdane said the police are trying to prepare for it.

"When we prepare our contingency plan, it is always based on the worst case scenario," he said. *Ansbert Joaquin, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

## Anson-Roa urges prayers for Roco

OPPOSITION candidate for senator Boots Anson-Roa sought prayers for the recovery of presidential candidate Raul Roco and asked people to stop acting like "political vultures" in trying to win the support of the people in the Roco campaign.

In a statement, Anson-Roa said Roco and his family need prayers for his speedy recovery.

"My family joins Sonia Roco, her children and the former senator's friends and supporters in asking God to heal whatever illness has been bothering him," she said.

Anson-Roa, who is running for senator under the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, said that Roco, like KNP presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., holds a strong yearning to be of service to his countrymen.

"Win or lose, I hope Senator Roco may be able to pursue his quest to help provide our youth with a better future, fight graft and poverty and make life easier for the Filipinos. He and FPJ share these common aspirations for our nation," Anson-Roa said.

# NBI probes tampering of computer at Comelec office

**By Carla P. Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation has started its investigation of the mysterious deletion of files in a Data Capturing Machine (DCM) and the opening of another DCM at the Commission on Elections office in Talisay City, Negros Occidental.

NBI special investigator Arnel Sigue said they had taken fingerprint samples from the tampered machines and would issue subpoena to the Comelec personnel of Talisay, about 7 km north of here.

On Tuesday, encoder March Anthony Robles discovered that the casing of the back of his DCM had been forced open and that the seal attached to it had been broken.

Another encoder also discovered that the master files in the DCM she was using had been deleted.

The DCMs are computers that capture the pictures and personal information of voters to be placed in the list of voters.

Marsha Cordero, poll supervisor in Negros Occidental, informed Ressureccion Borra, Comelec commissioner in charge of Western Visayas, about the incident and asked a separate investigation to be conducted by Manila-based Comelec personnel to ensure impartiality.

"Clearly somebody wanted to access the DCM but did not know the password so he or she resorted to prying open the casing at the back to get the hard disk," she said.

Cordero assured that the May 10 elections in Talisay will push through, saying the Comelec has a back-up file of the list of voters, which is stored in compact discs. Talisay has a voting population of 49,132.

Talisay Mayor Anthony Lizares said he did not want the elections to be postponed but the Comelec should assure that its back-up list was credible.

"There is no way of verifying the correctness of the alleged back-up file . . . How would one know if indeed the CDs contain the back up file of the deleted mater list?" he asked.

"Logically, the most fair move is for the re-registration and revalidation of voters of Talisay City," he said, but he noted that there was hardly enough time for that.

He said since January, he had been expressing fears and apprehension over the conduct of former Talisay election officer Susan Araiza during the registration and revalidation of voters.

Four months passed, he said and nothing was done to correct the problem.

Araiza was one of the Comelec personnel affected by a reshuffle in the Comelec.

She was ordered transferred to Valladolid town, Negros Occidental effective April 12, a day before the incident happened.

# NPA TAXATION OF CANDIDATES IN THE MAY 2004 ELECTIONS

Our conduct of elections is bad enough. Now comes the systematic taxing of candidates for office by the New People's Army (NPA) to make matter worse. The taxing is supposed to be only in those areas where the NPA claim they are in control. But now we hear it is being imposed on all candidates nationwide. But even if limited in its coverage, we ordinary citizens still have to ask some hard questions. These stem from objections to the NPA's action. But they also come from the inaction of government. We would like, hence, to look at these from what should be the side of government and from us who are members of civil society.

**Possible objections from Government**

We have not heard these objections being voiced by government people. But as citizens of this country, we have to raise them.

- If the practice of the NPA were done by other than them, would not it be classified under the law as extortion?
- If candidates who refuse to pay the money demanded of them by the NPA and fail to campaign as widely as is their right lose in their bid to be elected, would that be grounds for declaring a failure of elections?
- And if elections are not declared as having failed and the winners are those who paid the NPA, doesn't this mean control of our election process not by the government but by the NPA?
- In the negotiations for peace with the National Democratic Front-New People's Army (NDF-NPA), the greatest obstacle to the success of the talks is the refusal of the government to grant them the "belligerency status" they insist on having. What all the above questions ask really come down to only one: *Taxation is an act of a sovereign state; so what the NDF-NPA are actually doing in taxing of candidates is setting themselves up as such a state with powers of taxation in the territories that they claim to be under their control.* It seems, then, that what they have failed to get at the negotiation table, they are in fact getting in their taxing scam. So our final question is: Are they a sovereign state within another sovereign state?
- If soldiers sell arms to rebels and thus help them kill fellow soldiers, would this not be similar to citizens who pay "taxes" to rebels and thus, help them kill soldiers with guns bought with those "taxes"?

**Objections from Civil Society**

- The candidates least able to pay will suffer from the practice, the richer ones will have the greater chance of winning: Doesn't this fact only serve to make wider and deeper the great gap between the rich and the poor that the Leftist revolution is supposed to correct?
- If the restriction on the movement of candidates is a violation of their human rights, wouldn't the inability of voters to hear and see candidates running for office be as well a violation of *their* own right to be informed in order for them to be able to vote intelligently?
- The greatest harm done by the taxation program of the NPA is, in the final analysis, the intensifying of one of the worst problems Filipinos face: corruption in the public and private domains. And we are already seeing this in provinces: *Politicians known to be corrupt who have access to funds which are the fruit of their corrupt practices are the most likely to bow to the demands of the NPA and the most likely too to win in their bid to be elected to office.* Is not this then a complete denial of the NPA's avowed aim to reform Philippine society and do away with all the corruption that has been the scandal and bane for so long of our national life?

Because of the above, we raise these questions and objections for both the government and the NDF-NPA to address for our people's peace.

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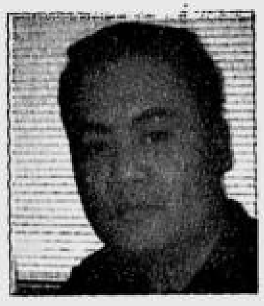
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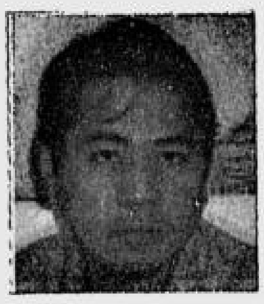
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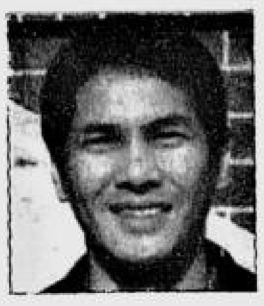
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# Crackdown on fake peso bills tightened

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has joined the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in cracking down on syndicates involved in the manufacture of fake P500 and P1,000 bills since these could especially proliferate during this campaign season.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said several units of the bureau are trying to track down the makers of fake bills upon the request of the BSP, which has noticed that numerous fake bills have been circulating lately.

"We are trying to bust the groups responsible for the counterfeit bills. I understand the Bangko Sentral has also sent out an alarm to the public against the fake money," he said in an interview.

Wycoco also said there is the possibility that the counterfeit money is being used by politicians as handouts or to buy votes from people.

He warned the public against selling their votes, not just because doing so is wrong, but because they might also be paid with fake money.

Most groups also forge bills of higher denomination like P500 and P1,000 because it is not easy to get the materials with which to produce the counterfeit bills, Wycoco said.

He added that some groups actually use old, phased out bills like the P2, P5 and P10 paper money to produce fake bills. The groups usually erase the old information on the phased out bills and put in the features of P500 and P1,000 bills.

Also, there is the possibility that rolls of paper used to produce legal tender have been stolen and are now being used to create fake paper money, he said.

But despite ingenious means employed by syndicates, Wycoco said there are still ways to detect if a bill is counterfeit, like the lack of a watermark.

## *Manila motorists told: Be patient*

By Tarra Quismundo

IT IS for safety's sake.

Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. yesterday called on motorists to be patient in complying with safety measures that are implemented on the city's streets and roads.

"Security should be everybody's concern, and everyone must be conscious," said Atienza in an interview yesterday.

At certain times during the night, some of the city's streets and highways are closed for mobile checkpoints as part of the anti-terrorism drive.

Depending on the security assessment of the police on a given day, checkpoints are placed at certain points in the city.

Motorists would only know about the checkpoint as they ply a certain route, as no prior advise is given. Traffic is thus diverted. Such a procedure is done to prevent criminals from evading the security checks.

This momentary inconvenience, said Atienza, should not peeve motorists as these are done for their own security.

Parking in areas where large crowds converge, including parks, is also prohibited at times to avert massive casualty in the event of an attack.

## Smut tabloids still sold on the streets

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

DESPITE an existing police drive, pornographic tabloids still find their way to the streets.

In an operation early yesterday morning in Caloocan City, police seized at least 97 pornographic tabloids.

The smut papers were confiscated from vendors in Monumento area during an operation by the district intelligence and investigation division about 12:30 a.m.

The confiscated materials carry suggestive nameplates like Sagad, Katas, Boso, Tigas TT and Todo. These tabloids carry nude photos of women and photos of pairs having sex.

The National Capital Region Police Office had launched Task Force Magdalena more than a week ago, a police drive against pornographic tabloids.

These smut materials are sold in the streets along with the other newspapers, making it very accessible to children.

In an earlier interview, NCRPO spokesperson Bart Bustamante told the INQUIRER the police would also arrest vendors who would be found selling smut papers. But no vendor was arrested during the NPD DIID operation yesterday, based on the division's report.

Bustamante also said the police would also file charges against the publishers of the smut tabloids. But the problem is most of the pornographic tabloids do not publish their editorial addresses and the list of their staff members.

Police had raided a publishing house allegedly printing smut tabloids and arrested several employees.

## Water cutoff in Sta. Cruz, Tondo this week

WATER service will be cut off this week in the Tondo and Sta. Cruz districts to allow the insertion of butterfly valves on two primary waterlines.

In Tondo, water will be cut off for 12 hours, from 10 tonight up to 10 a.m. tomorrow and will affect the area bounded by H. Lopez, J. Luna, V. Del Fuierro and Sunog Apog Creek, and the left side of H. Lopez up to the bridge.

In Sta. Cruz, the water service interruption will last for 15 hours, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on April 19.

There will be no water in the areas bounded by Ipil St., Alvarez, Tayuman, Estero de San Lazaro and Quiricada; along Quiricada from Rizal Avenue to Estero de San Lazaro; and at the Jose Reyes Memorial and San Lazaro Hospitals.

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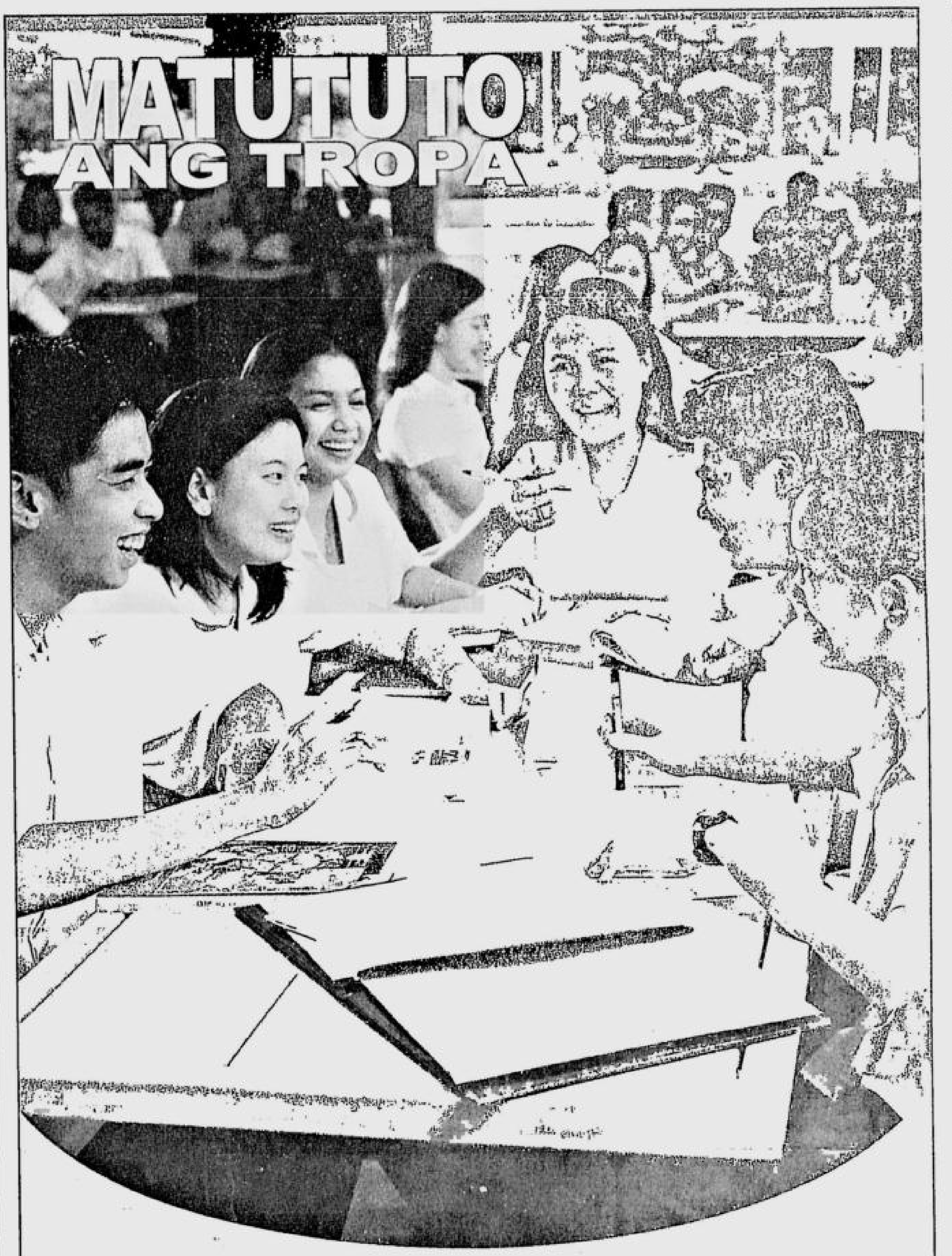

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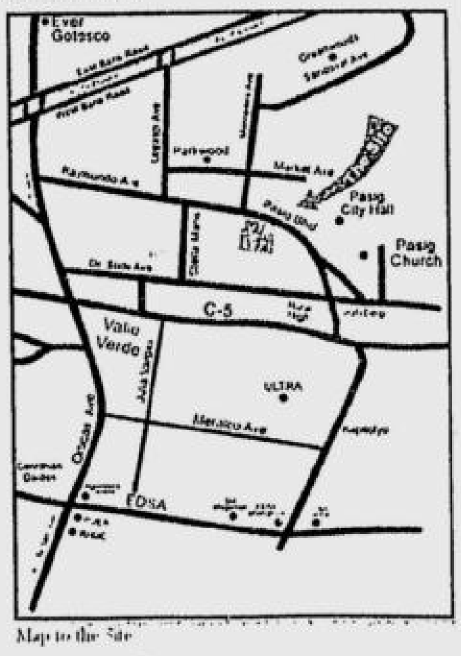

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# Check out your guards, security agencies urged

**By Tina Santos**

NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office Director Ricardo de Leon yesterday warned security agency operators to implement stringent screening measures and a thorough background check on their security guards.

De Leon issued the warning following the arrest of five suspects, four of whom were security guards, allegedly responsible for the robbery at the Philippine National Bank Kalayaan Avenue Branch in Quezon City during the Holy Week break.

"This only shows that there is indeed a necessity for strict scrutiny of security guards, particularly those who will be detailed to financial institutions," De Leon said.

He stressed that security agency operators should be wary of possible *"bantay-salakay"* security guards, whom he said are "force multipliers" of the policemen.

Central Police District Office director Chief Supt. Napoleon Castro identified the suspects as Nelson Espina, 37; spouses Lilibeth Pasco, 32, and Manuel Pasco, 38; Armando Arano, 36; and Roberto Perez.

Except for Lilibeth Pasco, all are security personnel of PNB, Castro said.

First to fall were Espina and the Pascos, while Arano and Perez were arrested in a follow-up operation on Wednesday night.

Recovered from the suspects was P776,000 of the total P5.5 million taken during the heist that took place Maundy Thursday but was discovered on Easter Sunday.

Castro said the suspects' arrest came after call boys who usually hang out in the area were rounded up. He said the male prostitutes provided vital information to investigation.

Witnesses claimed a white Toyota Corona was seen parked in the immediate vicinity of the bank on April 8.

The car's license plate was then traced to Espina and follow-up operations were immediately conducted.

POLICE Supt. Procopio Lipana of the Central Police District Criminal Investigation Unit (left) presents to the media Thursday the five suspects in the PNB robbery during the Holy Week break. Four of the suspects were security guards of the bank. JOAN BONDOC

# Confusion mars enforcement of 'no-plate' rule

**By Margaux Ortiz**

CONFUSION among the implementing agencies marred yesterday's implementation of the 'no-plate, no-travel' policy.

This prompted the Metro Manila Development Authority to postpone for one more day the apprehension of vehicles with no license plates.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said there had been "no definite interpretation" on the strict implementation of the policy deadline.

"There was supposed to be a meeting this week between the concerned agencies including the MMDA, National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, Land Transportation Office, and the Traffic Enforcement Group," Vergel de Dios said.

"No meeting took place to clarify the deadline set for the renewed implementation of the policy," he added.

Vergel de Dios, however, stressed that the renewed drive to impound vehicles with no license plates will begin today.

He said violators will face a P500 fine and immediate impounding of the vehicle.

The traffic chief explained that motorists were given until April 15 to obtain plates for their vehicles.

The traffic chief said that vehicles without car plates but with registration papers have been given special consideration since the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force and the MMDA began strictly implementing the policy early last month.

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Vehicles of motorists who fail to produce the official receipt/certificate of registration, delivery receipt or sales invoice were immediately impounded.

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Before she escaped, the suspect, who police identified as Ella Singson, even told the victim's daughter that Cua was just taking a bath.

The victim's daughter, Helen Natividad, said Singson asked her and her son to wait in the sala because Cua was taking a bath.

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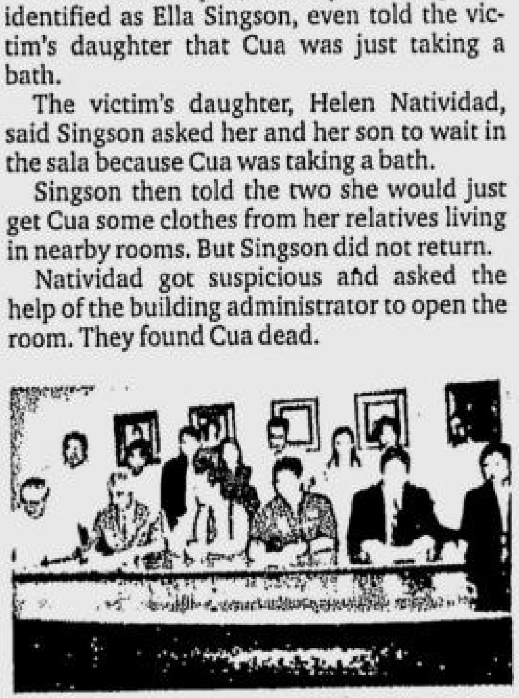

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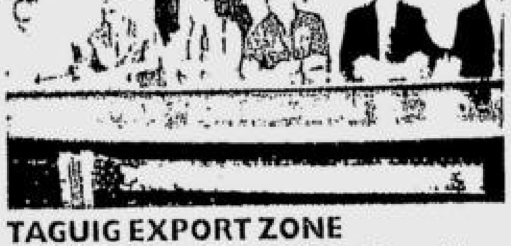

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# NCMH staff go loco over stolen payroll

## Marikina cop in jail again

NANAMAN?! PARANG 'DI AKO UMALIS NITO, A!

A MARIKINA policeman found himself in jail on Wednesday after he was nabbed by his colleagues while accompanying his wife at the Department of Justice building in Manila.

This is the second time that PO2 Gary Lee would be spending time in detention in four months.

He is facing charges of illegal possession of firearms, and of violating the Omnibus Election Code.

He was caught firing an unlicensed gun indiscriminately during the New Year celebration.

"He never got home. He went straight to jail after accompanying his wife," said Supt. Romeo Abaring, the city's deputy chief of police.

Lee's wife, Salima, has accused four Marikina cops of extorting P10,000 from her.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group arrested PO2 Pepito Valdez, PO2 Diones Salcedo, PO1 Virgilio Calanioga Jr. and PO1 Pedro Avelino Jr. in an entrapment operation at the Tumana District at 11 a.m. Tuesday.

They were caught red-handed, yielding P1,480 in marked money. *Luige del Puerto*

By Luige del Puerto

THE NIGHTMARES of the director of the National Center for Mental Health have come true.

Burglars took home the salary of some 2,000 employees of the National Center for Mental Health yesterday—something Dr. Benny Vicente, NCMH director, has long dreaded to happen.

"I have had nightmares about this, especially when we keep a huge amount at the cashier's office," Vicente said in a phone interview.

"That was why we requested to have our salary be distributed through the ATM (automated teller machine)," he said.

And as employees failed to bring home their pay yesterday, many have expressed concern for their families.

*"Ngayon, paano ko mabibili ang gatas ng anak ko* (Now that I don't have my salary, how would I buy my child's milk)?" Gilbert Burganio said on TV.

### Shelved

But the plan was temporarily shelved after the mental center received numerous complaints from ATM centers in the area.

"They said we were clogging the ATMs" Vicente said, explaining the center has around 2,000 employees who scramble to withdraw cash on paydays.

As of press time yesterday, authorities were still accounting for the lost cash. But at any given time, the cashier's office would hold around P6.2 million, that is, 15 days worth of salary.

The center's cashier, Dominador del Mundo, discovered the theft at 7:45 a.m. yesterday, just as he was reporting for work, according to PO3 Roberto Eugenio.

### Wooden racks

The day before, Del Mundo had already placed the money in envelopes, which were kept in 10 wooden racks, Eugenio said.

Initial reports said the burglars emptied five of the 10 racks. But they failed to take everything, according to Dr. Benny Vicente, the center's director.

Investigation revealed that the thieves entered the administration building, which houses the cashier's office, through the windows at the back.

Vicente said the burglars pried open the iron grills, apparently with a crow bar, and inserted an axe to create enough space for a man to get inside.

Once inside, the thieves scaled the wall, crept on the ceiling, and descended to the cashier's office.

Vicente said the payroll money is insured. But because it would take time before the insurance company could refund the money, the center would be asking the Department of Budget and Management for a cash advance.

"We will be asking DBM to replace what was lost," he said.

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# Marriage of Joey M to Alma annulled

By Margaux Ortiz

MARQUEZ

MORENO

A JUDGE has declared Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez and actress Alma Moreno's marriage null and void "on the ground of psychological incapacity of both parties."

In a five-page decision released on Wednesday, Parañaque Regional Trial Court Branch 260 Pairing Judge Fortunito Madrona awarded the custody of the former couple's four children to Moreno, Vannesa Lacsamana Marquez in real life.

The judge also ordered Marquez to give P200,000 monthly as support to his children.

The Court also dissolved the absolute community properties regime of Marquez and Moreno and ordered the transfer of real property titles in the names of their four children.

### Incapacity

The Court, which had considered the evidence presented by Marquez and the "expert finding" of psychiatrist Dr. Cecilia Villegas, had concluded that both parties "were suffering from psychological incapacity when they contracted marriage on Dec. 17, 1994."

Moreno and her counsel had failed to present their evidence, "perforcing the Court to rely on (Marquez's) evidence alone."

The court decision said the psychiatric report of Villegas showed that both parties "are psychologically incapacitated to comply with the essential marital obligations."

Villegas, who has been the consultant psychiatrist of the judiciary since 1997 up to the present, had testified that she had conducted psychological examination on Marquez and Ruel Ricafort, Moreno's brother-in-law.

Villegas said she invited Moreno for an interview but she failed to come.

### Disorders

The psychiatrist had concluded that "(Marquez) is suffering from inadequate and immature personality disorder, while (Moreno) is suffering from anti-social personality disorder."

"The root cause of the aforesaid conditions on petitioner was the absence of a father figure during his early development," Villegas said of Marquez in her testimony.

As for Moreno, Villegas said her parents lacked the ability to act as responsible parents causing the actress "to become impulse-ridden associated with ego deficits in planning and judgment, giving rise to primitive or poorly formed conscience or superego responsible for her antisocial behavior."

"She (Moreno) lacks empathy, love and basic trust," Villegas said in her assessment.

Marquez filed a petition for declaration of nullity of his marriage two years ago.

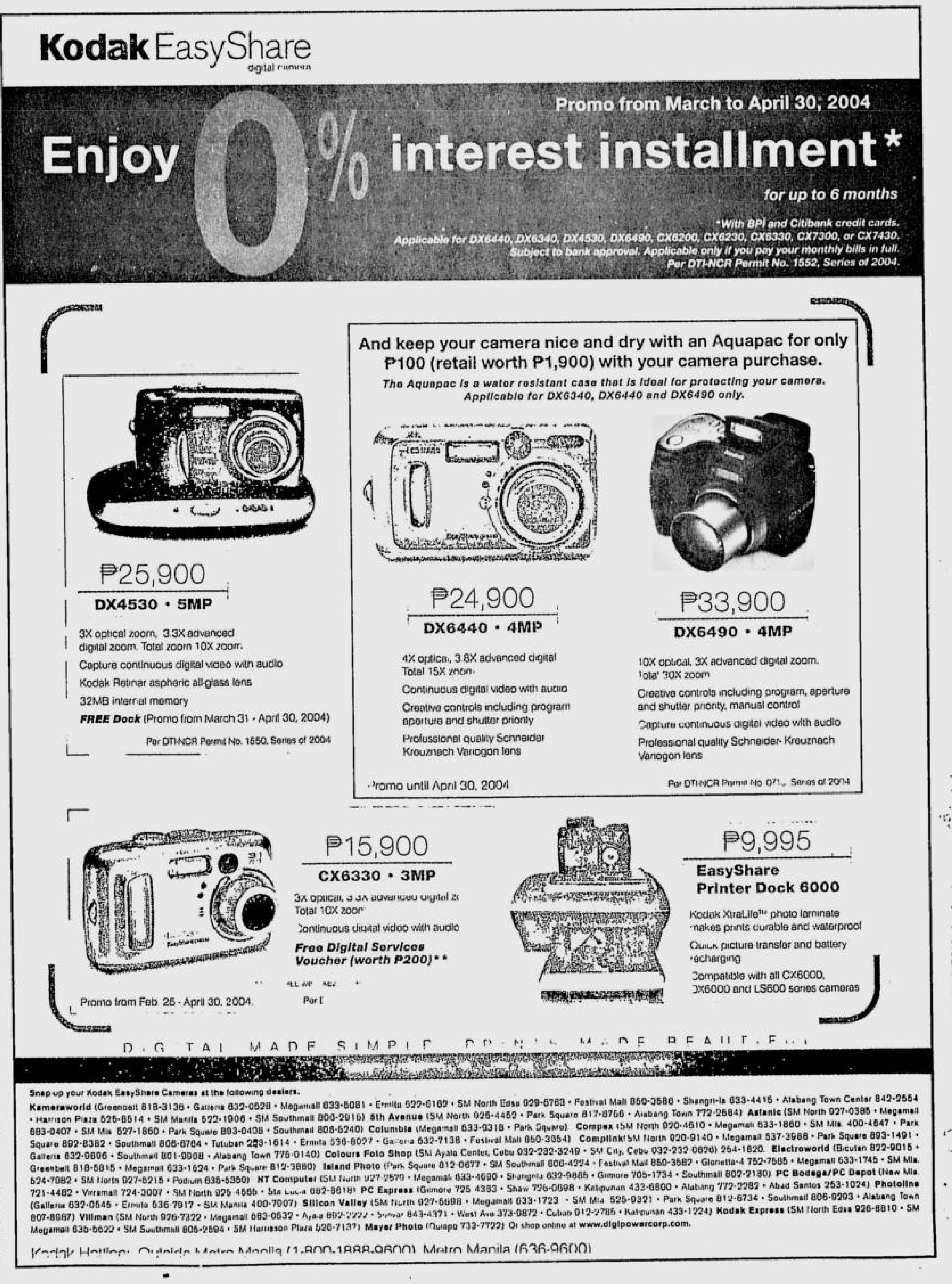
# Father, son die in Tanay fire

AN 80-YEAR-OLD man and his son died after hiding in the bathroom during a fire in Tanay, Rizal at dawn yesterday.

Fire authorities said Agapito de Silva Sr. and his son, Joselito, 43, both residents of M.L. Quezon, Barangay Kaybuto, died of suffocation.

Neighbors, however, were able to save the matriarch, Jesusa. At press time, she was being treated at the Cordona Hospital.

Fire investigators said the fire started at the house's ceiling at 2:30 a.m. But instead of heading for the door, the victims stayed in the bathroom. *Luige del Puerto*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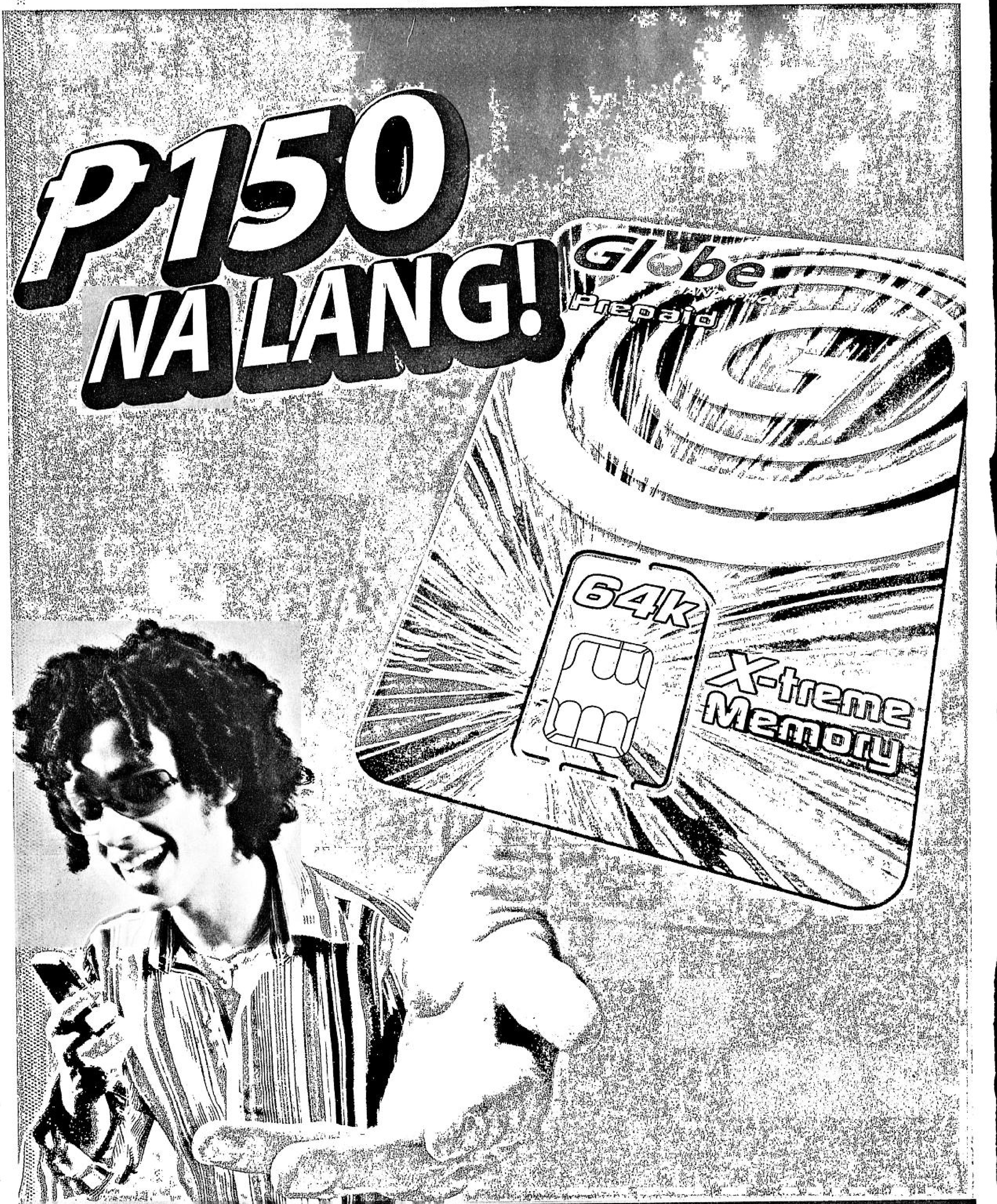
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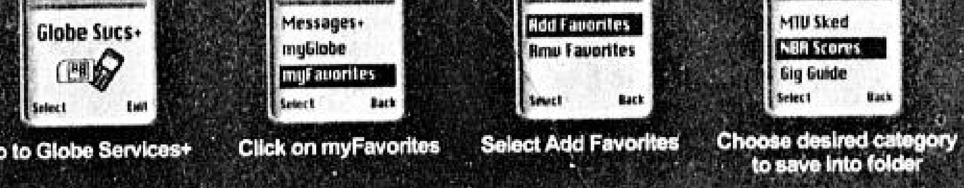
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# SPORTS

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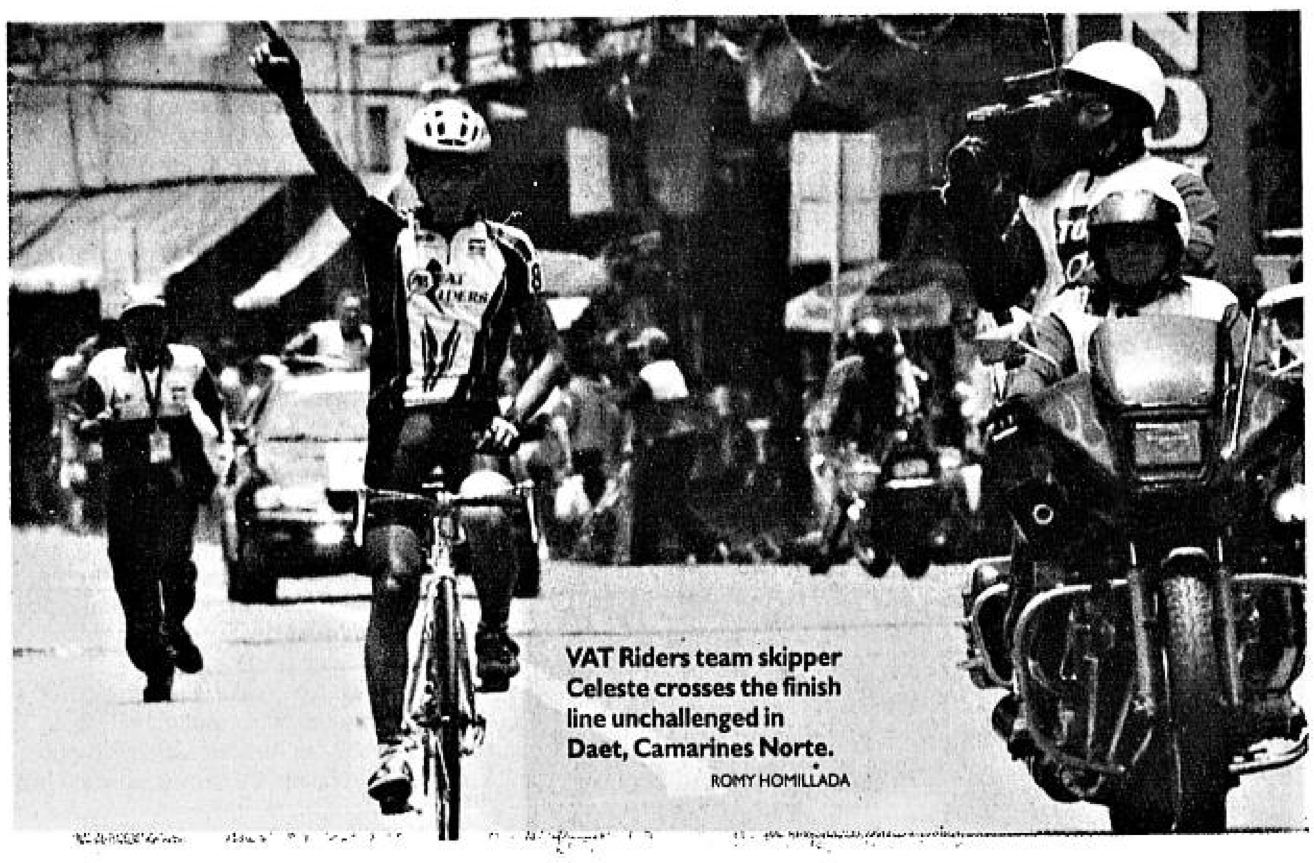

VAT Riders team skipper Celeste crosses the finish line unchallenged in Daet, Camarines Norte.
ROMY HOMILLADA

### TOUR PILIPINAS

# Celeste streaks to solo victory

**By Marc Anthony Reyes**

NAGA CITY—Drawing inspiration from his wife he left in Italy and kids waiting for him in Baguio City, veteran Felix Celeste stole the thunder from the big guns yesterday by winning Stage 1 of the Air21 Tour Pilipinas here.

Celeste, who is based in Rome with his family, stayed with the lead pack most of the way before pulling off a solo breakaway in the last five kilo-

CELESTE/ A26

## Shell denies player trade with Gin Kings

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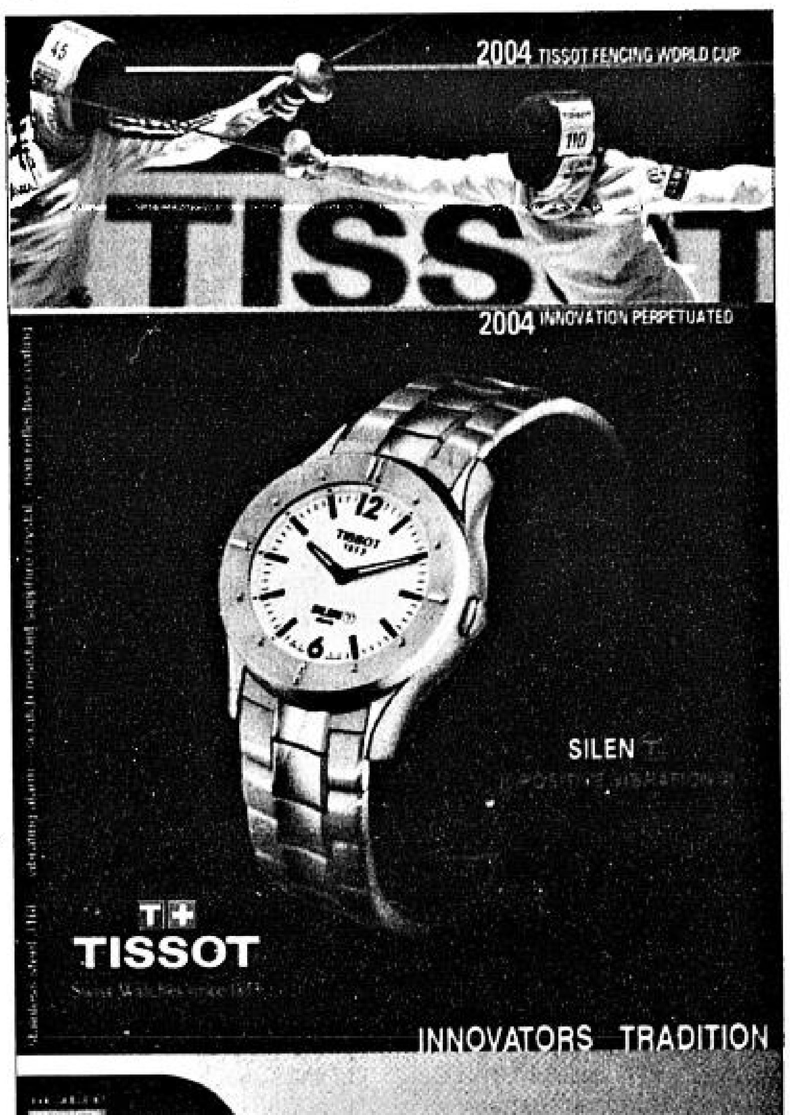
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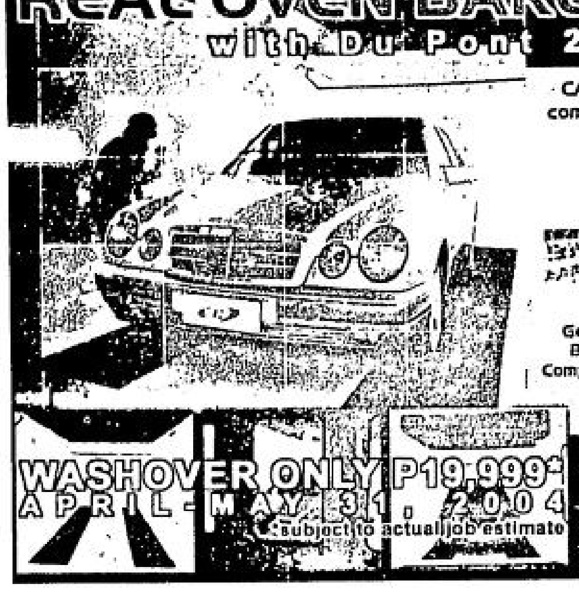
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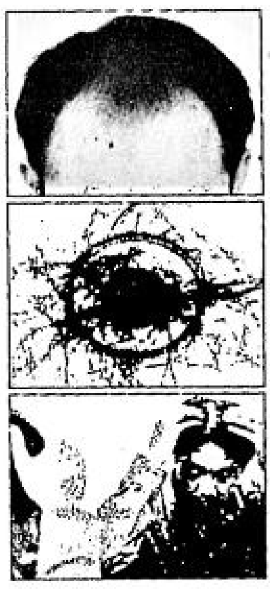

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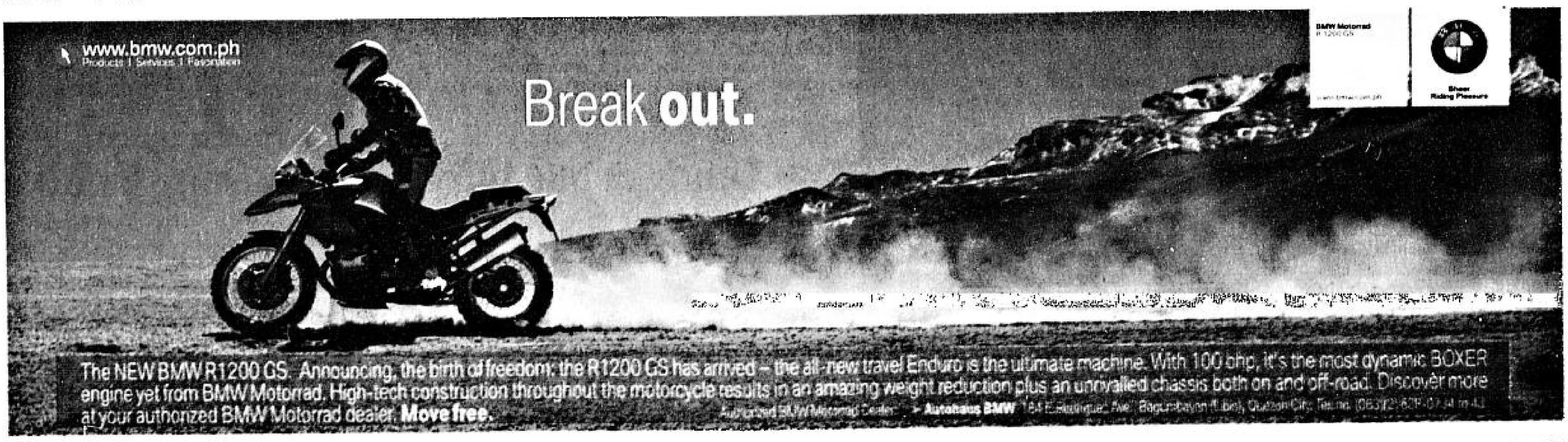
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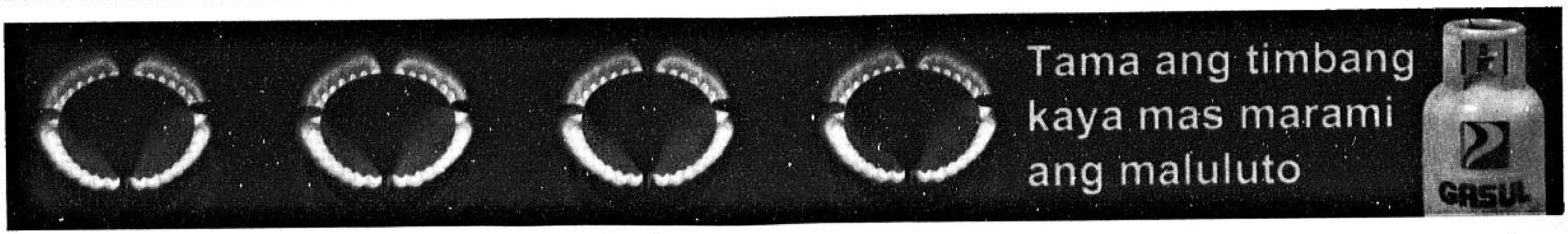
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GASUL

# FG Foundation confirms junior chess funding

THE FIRST Gentleman's Foundation yesterday confirmed it funded the training and participation of the national junior team in the 2004 World Youth Chess Championship in Halkidiki, Greece.

Rod Nepomuceno, FG project coordinator and the personal representative of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, said that the assistance for the Halkidiki competition was part of the P2,062,030 in aid that the foundation gave to the NCFP.

Nepomuceno stressed that the donation also covered the training of the junior woodpushers, travel expenses, billeting, and allowances of the children that took part in the World Youth chessfest.

He disclosed that it was NCFP secretary general Sammy Estimo who personally received the FG check for the amount.

In a signed and prepared financial statement Estimo himself prepared, he reported that 20 percent or P412,406 from the FG aid went to a "finder's fee."

Parents of those who took part in the youth tourney have complained that their children never got a single centavo of the allowances, forcing them to live under horrid conditions in Halkidiki.

In a board resolution on Oct. 9, 2003, the Philippine Sports Commission approved an assistance of P437,400, or the equivalent of $450 each for the allowances of the 11 players and seven officials of the RP team to the Halkidiki event.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said it was also Estimo who received the check.

Estimo said that the children, whose ages range from 9 to 18, failed to get their allowances because the amount was used to pay the NCFP's arrears with the International Chess Federation.

Lawyer Dhole Llanto, head of the PSC legal department, said that "realigning the assistance would be difficult to do."

"First of all, the NCFP had already received the money. And it should have been used as allowances of the participants in the World Youth Chessfest," Llanto said.

JUNGOLF TOUR

# Limandibratas, Korean ahead

BAGUIO—The Limandibrata brothers, Steven and Michael, hung on to slim leads in their respective divisions while Korean Lee Kwang-min stormed ahead in boys' Class A Wednesday of the Samsung-DHL Philippine Junior Golf Tour penultimate round at the Camp John Hay course here.

Michael held off a fast-charging Bino dela Paz in boys' Class D (9-10 years) with an 81-154 to lead by one, while Steven kept Bermuda-based Joshua Cabrera at bay with an 80 for a 155 total and a two-shot lead going into the final round.

The day, however, belonged to Lee who fired a tournament-best four-under-par 64 that ushered him to a four-shot lead over first-round frontrunner Nonoy Negrido. Lee was at 136 while Negrido, shooting a 70, went down to 140.

The round was marred by the disqualification of Class B (13-14) favorite and first-leg winner Junro Mamaril for signing a wrong scorecard.

With Mamaril out of the way, RJ Ramos tallied a 71-148 to move up by five over Junro's brother Jordan and Korean Lee Dong-gyun.

The five leaders in the girls division of the tourney sponsored by Samsung, DHL, Ricky Razon and Philippine Airlines with the support of Unilever and Gonads are virtually assured of the titles in their respective divisions.

Erika Salinas was on top by 12 in Class A; Bambi dela Paz had a 52-stroke lead in Class B, Cyna Rodriguez led by nine in Class C, Dottie Ardina went up by 22 in Class D, Felicia Medalla widened her lead to 22 in Class E and Abby Arevalo paced Class F by 67.

AR Ramos and Rupert Saragoza, son of top amateur Boyet, were safely on top in their own categories. Ramos led Class E by 39 and Zaragosa will bring a six-stroke lead into the final round.

# Realtors tame Coke Tigers in Zamboanga

Games Tomorrow (Ynares Center)
4:10 p.m.—Alaska vs Purefoods
6:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Barangay Ginebra

**By Musong Castillo,** *Contributor*

ZAMBOANGA—Sta. Lucia blitzed Coca-Cola in the second half last night, pulling out an 88-75 victory that snapped a three-game winning streak by the Tigers in a Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference game in this scenic city.

Dennis Espino shackled Coke import Mark Sanford and also contributed heavily in offense to lead the Realtors to just their third victory in 10 outings.

The Tigers dropped out of a share of second place with the loss, their fourth in 10 games.

The setback left Alaska alone in second spot and drove Coke into a tie with idle Talk 'N Text for third after the Phone Pals' 89-91 loss to the Shell Turbochargers Wednesday.

Espino limited Sanford, the league's second-leading scorer with 34 points a night, to a PBA career-low 12 markers, and Marlou Aquino scored 11 of his 19 points in the fourth period to complete the Coke annihilation.

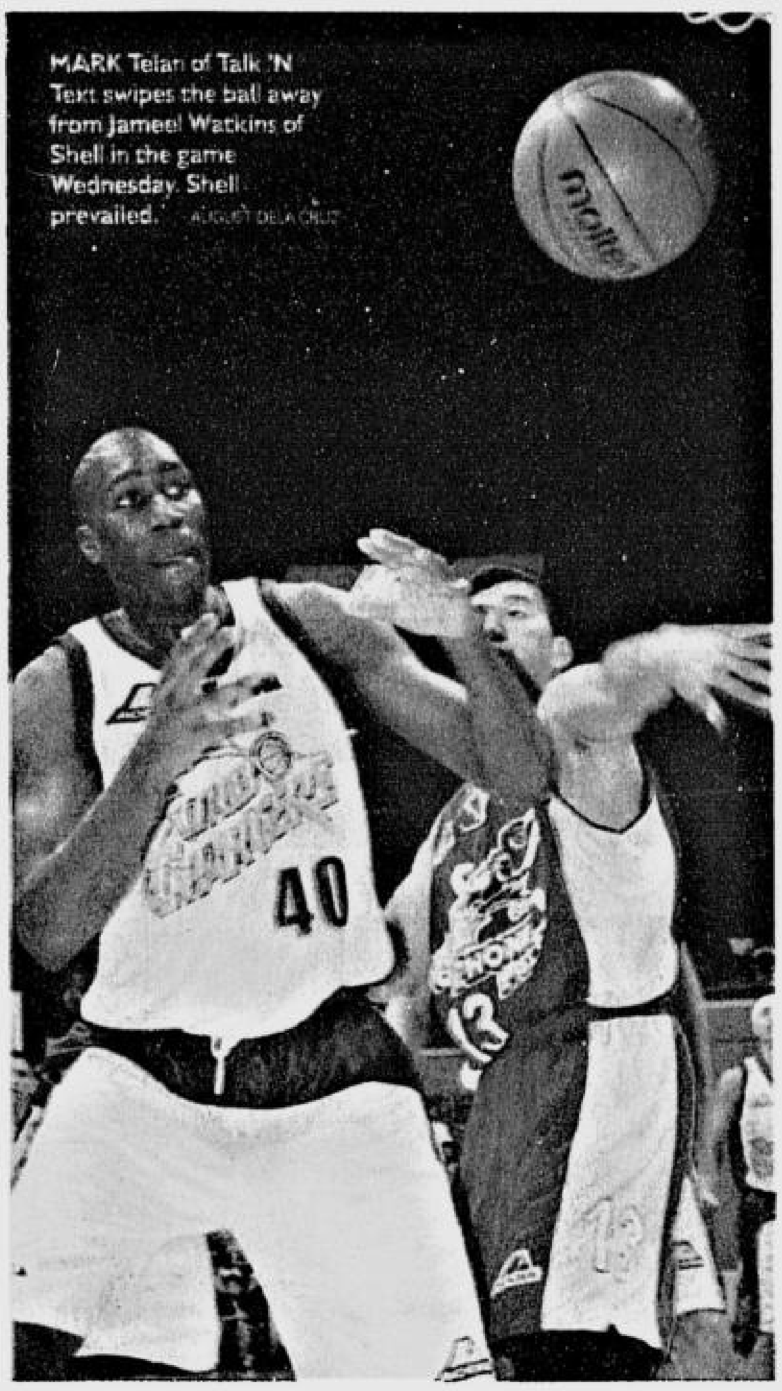
Aquino also had eight rebounds, all plucked down in the final two quarters where the Realtors turned a 40-41 halftime deficit into commanding double-digit spreads with a sleek running game and an unforgiving defensive stand.

## Shell denies 5-man trade with Ginebra

THERE WERE "no firm talks" of a five-player trade between Shell and Barangay Ginebra.

Shell board representative Bobby Kanapi announced this yesterday to deny an INQUIRER report of a deal that would have sent former Rookie of the Year Mark Caguioa and Rommel Adducul to Shell for Fil-Americans Anthony dela Cruz and Billy Mamaril and Chris Calaguio.

"There were no firm talks about that, but Adducul is in our wish list," Kanapi said.



MARK Telan of Talk 'N Text swipes the ball away from Jameel Watkins of Shell in the game Wednesday. Shell prevailed. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

# Hi Fidelity tops President's Cup Regatta 2nd race

SUBIC—Hi Fidelity and Stella Minter Ellison bucked a strong challenge put up by defending champion Karakoa yesterday on the second day of the Smart Infinity-12th President's Cup Regatta off the Subic Bay waters.

The Neil Pryde-skippered Hi Fidelity and the Fred Kinmonth-captained Stella Minter Ellison came off with a 1-2 finish under the provisional results of the Open Racing Class.

Hi Fidelity reached the finishing buoy of the 10-nautical windward-leeward mile race off Kalaklan Point in two hours, 24 minutes and 40 seconds.

Stella Minter Ellison managed to catch up with Ray Ordoveza's Karakoa as it rounded the last leeward buoy and crossed the finish line behind Hi Fidelity in 2:25.45.

Karakoa, which was forced to drop out of the first race last Wednesday after undergoing repairs for a broken rudder, fell behind in its chase to catch up with Hi Fidelity at the leeward mark. Ordoveza's boat went on to finish in 2:25.58.

A strong gust of westerly *amihan* winds suddenly got in the way of the crew's attempt to quickly lower Karakoa's spinnakers.

# *Fencers gun for Athens slots*

THREE Asian Games medalists and an Olympian are among the stars to watch in the Sharp Asian fencing championships and Asia/Oceania Olympic qualifying competitions which unwrap on Monday, April 19, at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

Busan Asian Games gold medalist Alexndr Axenov of Kazakhstan and Sydney Olympian Joanna Halls of Australia are expected to make waves together with Asian Games bronze winners Akihisha Mochida and Chieko Sugawara of Japan in the weeklong event organized by the Philippine Amateur Fencers Association (Pafa) and sponsored by Sharp Phils. Inc.

Several 2003 Southeast Asian Games gold medalists, including the Philippines' Walbert Mendoza, Rolando Canlas Jr., Emerson Segui, Wilfredo Vizcayno Jr. and Avelino Victorino Jr. are also seeing action, together with individual epee champion Siriroj Rathprasert of Thailand and the men's and women's sabre team winners from Vietnam.

Twenty-two countries are vying in the event also backed by the Department of Tourism, POC, PSC, PCSO, National Sports Grill, Philippine Star, IMG, DZSR Sports Radio and Holiday Inn Galleria.

# JVC-Under 14 Open badminton under way

GIANT electronic firm JVC kicks off its badminton season with the staging of the JVC Under-14 Open Badminton Championships today at the SM Megamall.

Danica Bolos, Ma. Chona Medina, Fatima Cruz and Liza Encarnacion lead the girls singles cast while Gerard Certeza, John Pasicola, Ramon Guerrero and Christopher Pilones are among the players to watch in the boys division.

Other events on tap are the ladies and boys doubles and the mixed doubles.

Also advancing to the main draw are Jinky Gonzaga, Carla Lizardo, Crismayne Co and Abigail Garcia, and Paul Vivas, Christian Labaguis, Joseph Paredes and Peter Magnaye.

# Celeste streaks to solo victory

From page A25

meters just outside the city proper to capture the P10,000 lap prize.

The Urdaneta, Pangasinan native, competing in his 10th Tour, clocked three hours, 19 minutes and 44 seconds for the easy 141-km ride from Sorsogon City.

Warren Davadilla, the 1998 titlist, tried to chase Celeste but couldn't sustain his bid due to cramps although he showed enough spunk to salvage second place for the day over Merculio Ramos by leading the way home for the 17-man second pack.

"It (the cramps) just caught up with me in the final dash to the finish line," said Davadilla, who timed 3:20:18.

In winning, he also caught the fancy of fans anticipating an opening-day showdown between defending champion Arnel Quirimit, who was ranked 14th while finishing in the second pack, and 1996 titlist Victor Espiritu, who came home with the 18-man sixth pack two minutes and 14 seconds behind Celeste.

"I called up my wife this morning and I told her that this lap (stage) is for her. She just laughed it off," said the 32-year-old Celeste of the call he made minutes before leaving Sorsogon City.

It turned out that the bike-loving OFW meant what he said.

ROMY HOMILLADA

**DAVADILLA (21) outsprints Obosa to stage second place honors.**

Celeste also snatched a stage last year from Olongapo to Dagupan where halfway through the route, his wife and kids showed up right in the middle of the highway.

He was at that time losing strength, but with the sight of his family cheering him, Celeste found a second wind that carried him to the lap win.

Celeste joined her wife in Italy, where she works as a caregiver, when the Tour went into hibernation starting in 1999. When he learned of last year's Tour revival, he returned home, joined the eliminations and made it to the Tour proper.

Now employed in a ham-making factory, Celeste hit town last Feb. 2 and started training in Baguio, logging 180 to 250 km every weekend.

His son Kevin, 4, and Kiara, 2, are now in Baguio City waiting for him there but his wife wasn't allowed to go back home this year.

Celeste determinedly moved from the sixth group in the last 25 km entering Pili, Camarines Sur, and worked his way up to the lead pack.

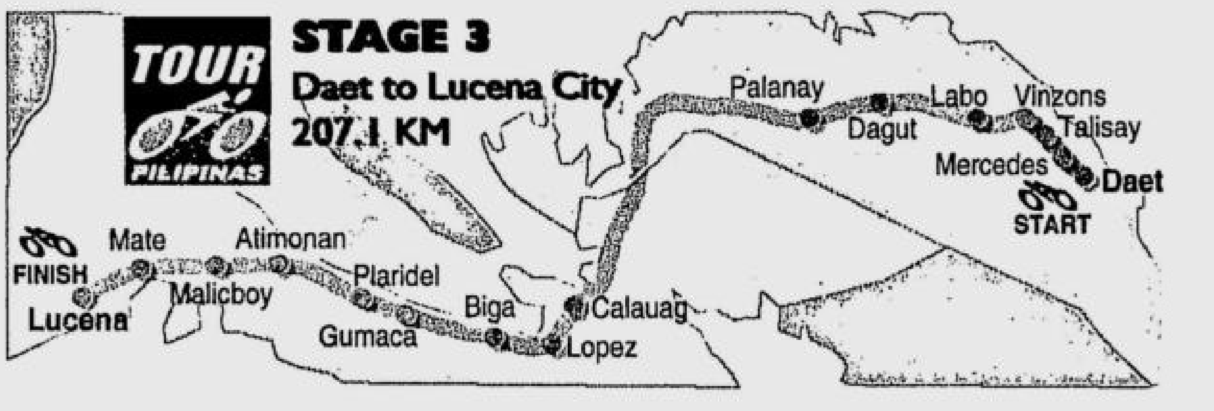
"I saw him join our group and then pulled away to join the pack before us," said two-time champ Renato Dolosa, who was by then in the fourth group and wound up 36th for the day. "After we joined him in that group, he just pulled away again."

The diminutive Davadilla, a member of the RP team, said he began feeling cramps on his right leg in the final 15 km, but reserved just enough strength to finish second.

Quirimit said he is saving his legs for the grueling stages up North. "I'm just observing the situation. It's a long way to go," he said.

Scant seconds separate Samsung and Dole for the top slot in the team race, but Celeste's Vat Raiders ironically found itself second to last in the 12-team field.

Today's 98-km second stage will bring the riders to Daet, Camarines Norte, which will feature a climb through the famous Bitukang Manok in the boundary of the two Camarines provinces.



## STAGE 1 RESULTS

1. F. Celeste (Vat Riders) 3:19.44

2. W. Davadilla (Purefoods), M. Ramos (Samsung), E. Quinonos (Purefoods), Valdez (Patrol 117), A. Benosa (Metro Drug), L. Reynante (Postmen), S. Barnachea (Mail and More), F. Alagano (Dole), R. Tanguilig (PLDT), V. Baluyot (Samsung), E. Obosa (Samsung), O. Vilanueva (Dole), A. Quirimit (Tanduay), E. Domingo (Postmen), A. Marcelo (Mail and More), B. Llentada (Tanduay), A. Primero (Dole)—34 seconds behind

19. T. Martinez (Beer na Beer), P. Manapul (Marsman), M. Priero (Dole)—43 seconds behind.

22. G. Asiado (Patrol 117)—56 seconds behind

23. C. Jasul (Beer na Beer), D. Posillero (Patrol 117), G. Amar (Postmen), J. Talaver (Purefoods)—1.52 minutes behind

27. N. Estayo (Vat Raiders), S. Servino (Tanduay), C. Guieb (Marsman), M. Reyes (PLDT), D. Hardin (Postmen), A. Benedicto (Beer na Beer), V. Espiritu (Beer na Beer), P. Curtan (Patrol 117), R. Gorantes (Metro Drug), R. Dolosa (Metro Drug), B. Lopez Jr. (PLDT), W. Calosa (Tanduay), R. Navarro (Tanduay), B. Stalin (Purefoods), V. Espiritu (Beer na Beer), G. Bergonio (Samsung), G. Apolinar (Postmen), M. Robosa (Tanduay)—2.14 behind

Team Standings
1. Samsung 10:00:43.6
2. Dole 10:00:52.6
3. Purefoods 10:02:06.3
4. Postmen 10:02: 11.3
5. Tanduay 10:02:36.0
6. Patrol 117 10:02:36.5
7. Beer na Beer 10:04:05.1
8. Metro Drug 10:04:17.4
9. PLDT 10:04:17.4
10. Marsman 10:04:47.8
11. VAT Raiders 10:05:26.3
12. Mail and More 10:09:52.9

# Quirimit title bid gets boost from Tanduay

HE IS known by many names, but the word "Kapitan" does not fit better than now for philanthropist and business tycoon Lucio Tan.

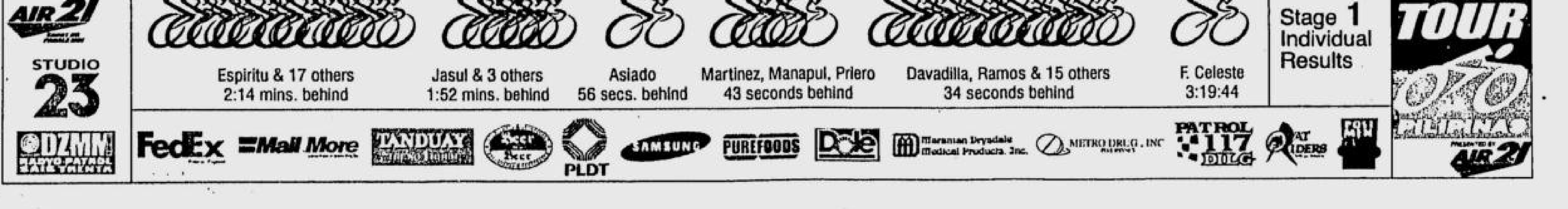
With the 2004 Tour Ng Pilipinas back on the road, the taipan plays godfather to a bunch of determined warriors on wheels who are looking to better a fourth-place finish in last year's edition of the summer classic.

Team Tanduay is a darkhorse in the field even with defending individual champion Arnel Quirimit leading the way, as a host of new faces, virtual greenhorns in the Tour, make up the core of the squad.

"Dr. Tan has always had a soft heart for the Filipino athlete," said Wilson Young, Tanduay chief operating officer. "He never lets a day pass without knowing the state of sports in the country."

Yesterday, Team Tanduay got off to a shaky start as Quirimit, as expected, was left to carry the fight for the Rhum Riders after the punishing first lap.

Tanduay, as a team, clocked 10 hours, two minutes and 36 seconds to stand in fifth spot heading into the second lap from here to Daet, Camarines Norte covering 98 kilometers, today.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Toyota Otis strikes down Sunkist-UST

**By Trina Ibarle**

**TOYOTA OTIS-Letran rocked the 2004 PBL Unity Cup eliminations yesterday by stopping hitherto unbeaten and solo leader Sunkist-UST, 70-64, at the Pasig Sports Center.**

Boyet Bautista, only five feet eight, stood tall for the Knights with 22 points, sparking a dizzying last-quarter onslaught that finally gave the rookie squad a 66-64 lead with 16 seconds left.

Jonathan Pinera sealed the upset win by scoring the Knights' last four points after Christian Coronel missed a game-tying layup.

It was only the second victory in four outings for the Knights, who pushed Sunkist-UST down to second place, in a tie with Viva Mineral Water, which routed Montaña Pawnshop, 75-65, earlier.

Sunkist-UST and Viva have similar 3-1 records behind idle Welcoat Paints, which found itself suddenly on top alone at 3-0.

Arwind Santos shot 27 points and grabbed 12 rebounds as Viva recovered from a recent 89-80 loss to Welcoat.

**Games Tomorrow (*Pasig Sports Center*)**
2 p.m.—Sunkist vs Welcoat
4 p.m.—Hapee vs BluStar

**The scores:**

**First Game**

**VIVA 75**—Santos 27, Isip 12, Misolas 11, Ybañez 11, Co 6, Raneses 4, Miranda 2, Jones 2, Rizada 0, Yabut 0, Razon 0, Garcia 0.

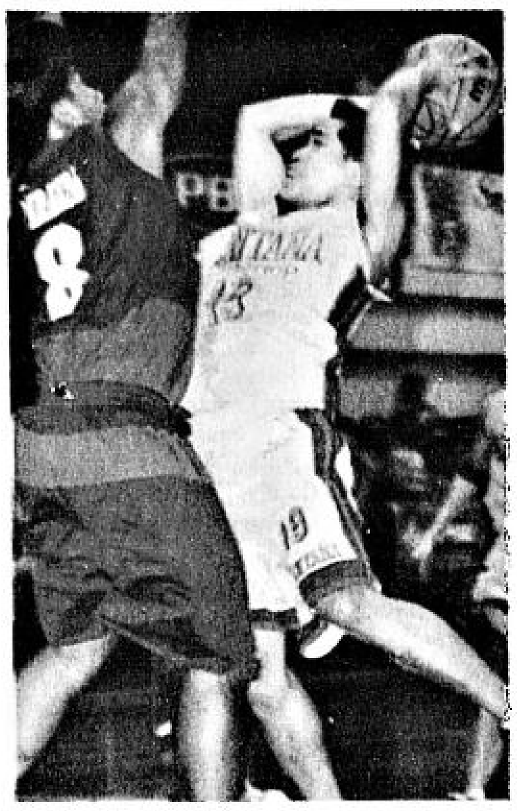
**Montaña 65**—Salvador 17, Magpayo 11, Junio 9, Buenafe 8, Espiritu 7, Vergara 4, Tolentino 3, Ilanga 2, Najorda 2, Manigo 0, Guerreo 0, Bonus 0.

Quarters: 26-17, 42-28, 65-50, 75-65.

**Second Game**Toyota Otis-Letran 70—Bautista 22, Enrile, 12, Daa 11, Aban 9, Dula 8, Pinera 4, Moody 2, Aldave 2, Valdez 0, Reyes 0, Anabo 0, Santos 0.

**Sunkist-UST64**—Coronel 11, Vixcarra 11, Luanzon 10, Capati 8, Patrimonio 7, Latoreno 6, Santos 4, Compton 3, Paterno 2, Hubalde 2.

Quarters: 10-12, 27-28, 42-46, 70-64.


**AL Vergara of Montaña Pawnshop drives off Dennis Miranda of Viva-FEU.** ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

# Ramirez eyes another romp

PETRON Ultron-SRA campaigner Louie Ramirez seeks a follow-up to his opening-day triumph when the third and fourth rounds of the 2004 SVI-Petron Grand Prix reel off this weekend at the Subic International Raceway.

Ramirez topped one of two races during the opening round last March 28 to take the lead in the centerpiece Blaze super saloon category of the 14-part series organized by the Sports Values Inc. (SVI) in cooperation with Petron Corp.

One of four sons of race legend and now SVI president Pocholo Ramirez, Louie has a two-leg aggregate of 16 points.

Another Petron Ultron-SRA driver—Kookie Ramirez—is a close second overall with 10 points. He ruled the season-opening race but failed to finish the second round.

Tied for third were two-time champion George Ramirez and Dominique Bon.

Defending champion Jody Coseteng of Caltex-Red Horse will also try to redeem himself from a near-disastrous start. He failed to finish the opening race and skipped the second.

# Tanauan, Bacolod L'Leaguers pull thru

TANAUAN CITY—Host Tanauan and Bacolod pulled off their third straight victories and Batangas City made it back-to-back yesterday to show the way in their respective groups in the Little League division of 2004 Philippine Series at the Tanauan baseball grounds in Barangay Pagaspas here.

Michael Jay Sayson and Benjie Esparas belted a home run each as Bacolod seized the lead with a three-run attack in the fifth inning en route to a 4-1 win over the highly regarded Zamboanga City in Diamond 2 and solo leadership in Group B.

In Diamond 3, Amber Plaza fanned 11 batters in a no-relief, two-hit job as Tanauan whipped Cagayan, 5-1, to match the 3-0 card of idle Nueva Ecija in Group C.

Batangas scored four big runs in the fourth inning to outslug Isabela, 9-5, and catch Silay City in the lead in Group D.

In the Junior League, Boy Llaguro put Kalumpang ahead with a two-run double in the second inning and the boys from Marikina City never looked back in a 6-3 blasting of Nueva Ecija.

In Big League softball, DepEd Bacolod goes for the clincher today against Illam in their best-of-three championship clash. Bacolod flogged Illam, 11-1, last Tuesday and stood on the verge of making it to the World Series in the United States.

**The results:**

**LLBB**—Canlubang 10, Cavite 0; Bacolod 17, Sta. Cruz, Laguna 0; Mt. Province 8, Pampanga West 7; Camarines Norte 9, Valenzuela 7; Marist 13, Canlubang 11; Valenzuela 12, Makati 11; Bataan 10, Sta. Cruz 6; Bacolod 4, Zamboanga 1; Mt. Province 13, San Pablo 2

**JLBB**—Illam 14, N. Ecija 8; Kalumpang 6, Nueva Ecija 3; **SLBB**—Nueva Ecija 15, Cagayan 0; Lipa 7, Quezon City 0; **BLBB**—Tanauan 10, San Pablo 0; **LLSB**—Illam 18, Cavite 7; **JRSB**—Bacolod 8, Silay City 1; **SLSB**—Bacolod 15, Isabela 0

# Taal Oil, Wangs forge title clash

SHOOTING champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's Taal Cooking Oil squad blasted Air Force, 98-80, Wednesday to arrange a showdown with Wangs Ball Club for the NBDL (National Basketball Development League) title today at the UM gym.

The Cooking Oil Masters and Wangs, which subdued Navy, 105-101, in the other semifinal game, clash at 4:30 p.m. after the airmen and the gobs dispute third spot at 3.

Taal led only by one at halftime, but an explosive finish keyed by former Jose Rizal University star Ernani Epondulan turned the game into a blowout.

Epondulan led all scorers with 23 points.

**The scores:**

**First Game**

**WANGS 105**—Tierra 22, Aquino 20, Tanigue 14, Rodriguez 12, Tolentino 12, Matias 10, De Jesus 7, Jamil 3, Regalado 3, Gomez 2

**NAVY 101**—Lagare 25, Sto. Domingo 21, Malana 15, Bagulo 9, Tropa 7, Araneta 6, Ravanes 5, Segio 4, Gatdula 4, Galiza 4, Bernales 1

**Halftime:** 44-37

**Second Game**

**TAAL 98**—Epondulan 23, Yee 18, Kalaw 13, Caceres 11, Mendoza 8, Reyes 6, Manuel 5, Alidio 4, Serrano 4, Buendia 3, Corbin 2, Ferma 1

**PAF 80**—Gumatay 15, Codamon 14, Lopez 11, Tama 9, Pilo 8, Ibanez 7, Gaspar 6, Nolasco 3, David 3, Espiritu 2, Santos 2

**Halftime:** 44-43

# Greenhills 5 Miler set

THE ANNUAL Greenhills 5 Mile Classic fires off from the Greenhills Shopping Complex on Ortigas Avenue on May 9.

Greenhills Running Club president Dr. Jerry Jarin said the fourth edition of the event, sponsored by Procter & Gamble Phils. Distributing, Inc. in cooperation with the Greenhills Shopping Complex, is expected to lure 1,000 runners in and around the Greenhills area.

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# Heat trim Nets, finish with winning record

MIAMI—Caron Butler scored 22 points and Dwyane Wade sparked a third-quarter surge to help the Miami Heat finish with their first winning record in three years by beating the New Jersey Nets, 96-84, Wednesday night.

The Heat earned home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs, beginning this weekend. They will host New Orleans after Milwaukee lost to Toronto, giving Miami fourth place in the East.

"That's what we came here tonight to do, and it went our way," guard Rafer Alston said. "We took care of our end, and Toronto took care of their end."

The game was meaningless for the Nets, and none of their starters played more than 30 minutes. New Jersey had clinched its third consecutive Atlantic Division title and will open the playoffs at home Saturday against the New York Knicks.

Miami, which lost 103 games the past two seasons, finished 42-40 under first-year coach Stan Van Gundy. The Heat started 0-7 and were 11 games below .500 on March 2, but won 17 of their last 21.

"I know we're moving on to something more important," Van Gundy said. "But I congratulated our guys very sincerely. It's a great accomplishment to come from where they did."

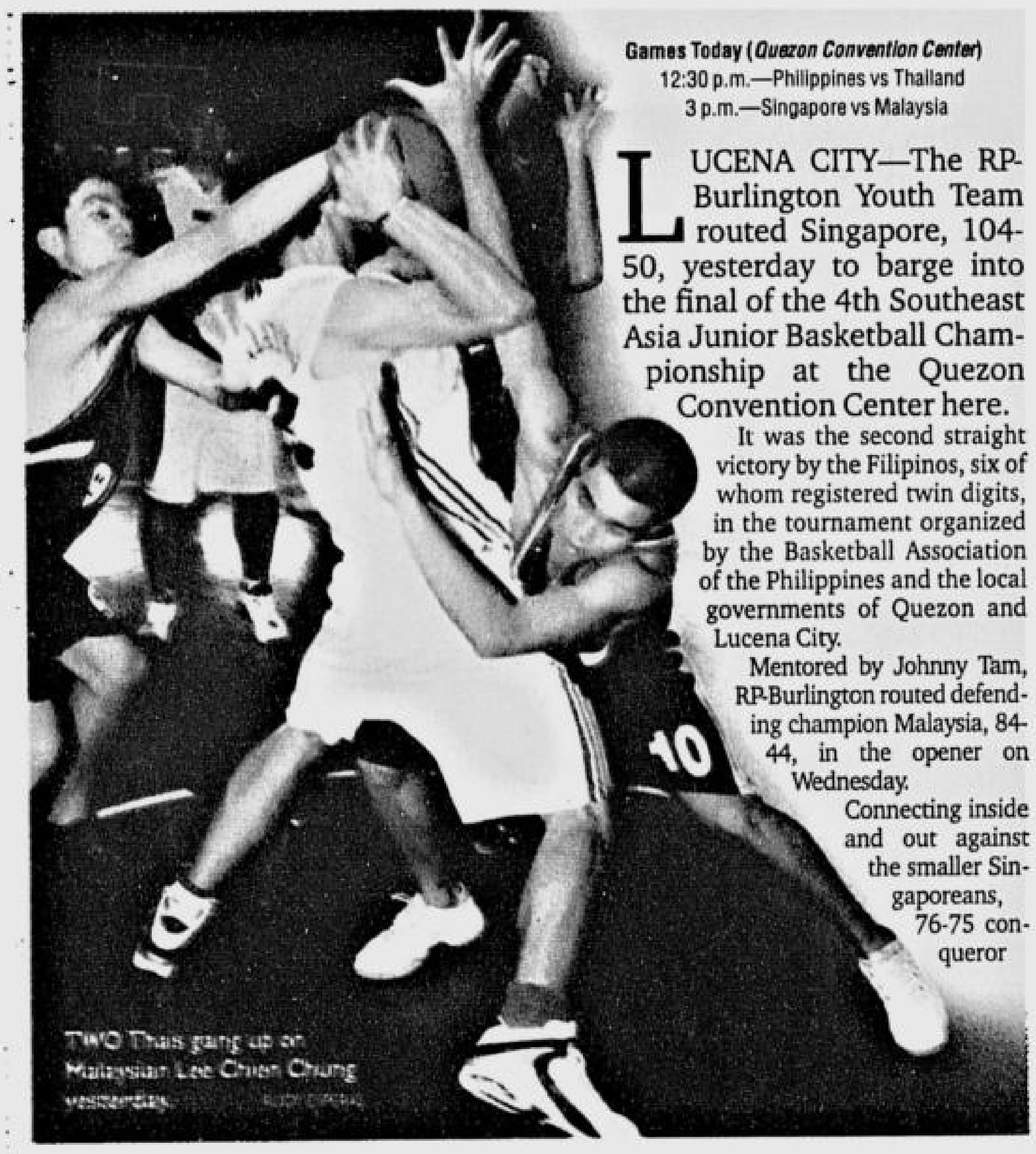
In Washington, the playoff-bound Hornets wrapped up the regular season with one of their easiest wins of the year. Baron Davis scored 26 points and Jamaal Magloire had 23 points and 14 rebounds in securing the fifth seed in the Eastern Conference. New Orleans will play at Miami to open the playoffs. The Hornets (41-41) also avoided their first losing season since 1991-92. *AP*

**Complete results:** Boston 137, Atlanta 132; New Orleans 94, Washington 78; Orlando 95, Philadelphia 89; Cleveland 100, New York 90; Miami 96, New Jersey 84; Indiana 101, Chicago 96; Toronto 89, Milwaukee 87; Minnesota 107, Memphis 90; San Antonio, 93 Denver 67; Phoenix 89, Utah 84; Dallas 92, Houston 89; LA Lakers 105, Portland 104 (2OT); Seattle 118, LA Clippers 87; Golden State 97, Sacramento 91

**HIGH school phenom Dwight Howard, 18, announced Wednesday he will enter the NBA draft.** AP

## SEABA CAGEFEST

# RP Youths rout Singapore



TWO Thais gang up on Malaysian Lee Chien Chung yesterday.

**Games Today** (*Quezon Convention Center*)
12:30 p.m.—Philippines vs Thailand
3 p.m.—Singapore vs Malaysia

LUCENA CITY—The RP-Burlington Youth Team routed Singapore, 104-50, yesterday to barge into the final of the 4th Southeast Asia Junior Basketball Championship at the Quezon Convention Center here.

It was the second straight victory by the Filipinos, six of whom registered twin digits, in the tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines and the local governments of Quezon and Lucena City.

Mentored by Johnny Tam, RP-Burlington routed defending champion Malaysia, 84-44, in the opener on Wednesday.

Connecting inside and out against the smaller Singaporeans, 76-75 conqueror of the Thais on Wednesday, the Filipinos blitzed to a 31-10 lead and settled the issue by halftime, 60-27.

The Filipinos will gun for a sweep of the elimination round when they tackle the Thais at 12:30 p.m. today. Even with an unlikely loss, RP-Burlington is assured of the second final berth with its romp over Singapore.

Thailand got back on track with a 74-70 victory over Malaysia in the first game yesterday.

The Malaysians fell to 0-2 in the tournament being supported by Burlington Socks, Cebuana Lhuillier, Healthy Options, Lifan, Molten, YKL, Absolute Distilled Water, Accel and the Philippine Sports Commission.

San Beda's Ogie Menor and Adamson's Daryl Bautista led RP-Burlington with 15 points each. Other big contributors in the team out to improve on its fourth-place finish in the 2002 Kuala Lumpur edition were James Martinez with 13, Jason Castro 11, Martin Antonio 10 and Mike Baldos 10.

The game's outcome beyond doubt, Tam had the luxury of shuffling his bench through platoon substitutions.

"I want to utilize the full complement of my bench. This is my reward for them for the long preparation we went through," said Tam.

Meanwhile, IBC 13 will telecast the RP-Thailand tussle at 6-8 p.m. today and the championship game at 9-11 p.m. tomorrow.

**Scores:**

**RP-BURLINGTON 104**—Menor 15, Bautista 15, Martinez 13, Castro 11, Antonio 10, Baldos 10, Ababou 8, Taganas 7, Astorga 6, Calatayud 5, Sy 4, Medina 0.

**SINGAPORE 54**—Yong 11, Ping 7, Tay 6, Oh 6, Liew 5, Johnson 5, Lim 4, Chou 4, Leong 2.

**Halftime:** 60-27

# Nestea Beach Volley finals unfolds today

TWENTY-FOUR teams from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao plunge into action today as the semifinals and finals of the Nestea Beach Volley 2004 gets going at the world-famous island paradise of Boracay.

Twelve teams each in the men's and women's divisions which made it through the elimination rounds will vie for this year's crown, a whopping P100,000 winner's purse and P50,000 worth of sports equipment that goes to the winning schools.

The top four men's and women's pairs from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao booked tickets to the Boracay phase—a three-day event that also offers a lot of fun and activity for competitors and beach volley fans.

Mikasa, Speedo, Smart Buddy, Cebu Pacific, Coppertone Sport. TGI Friday's, Power Plant Mall and Ayala Center Cebu are sponsors of the sizzling event, which is being presented by Nestea for the eighth straight year.

The Boracay qualifiers from Luzon are De La Salle University, University of the Philippines, College of St. Benilde and Far Eastern University in the men's division and College of St. Benilde, Letran, University of Baguio and Adamson in the women's side.

From the Visayas are Iloilo Doctor's College, University of San Jose Recoletos, Foundation University and University of Negros Occidental Recoletos (men) and University of the Visayas, Southwestern University, University of San Agustin and the University of Negros Occidental Recoletos (women).

Representing Mindanao are the men's teams of Mindanao State University, University of Mindanao-Tagum, University fo Mindanao and Ateneo de Davao University and the women's teams of University of Mindanao-Tagum, Ateneo de Davao University, Holy Cross of Davao College and Mindanao State University.

## KNOCKOUT OF A TALE

**Manny Pacquiao's journey from being a local boxing hopeful to two-time world champion is dramatically captured in a new video, "No Fear: The Manny Pacquiao Story." For those who have just tuned in to his heroic feats, this is a chance to see what the whole fuss is all about. The video contains his early fights. Blow by blow, it reveals why Pacquiao is destined to join the ranks of such Filipino champions as Pancho Villa and Gabriel "Flash" Elorde who are enshrined in Boxing's Hall of Fame. "No Fear: The Manny Pacquiao Story" is released by Viva Video and is available on VCD and DVD.**

# Pool aces leave

BACK-TO-BACK titlist Efren "Bata" Reyes led four Filipino pool masters who left yesterday to compete in the 3rd leg of the 2004 San Miguel Asian 9-ball tour starting Saturday in Hong Kong.

Reyes was accompanied by Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Warren Kiamco and Antonio Gabica.

Reyes, who is turning 50 on Aug. 26, won the first leg in Singapore via an 11-4 victory over Kiamco then ruled the second leg in Vietnam at the expense of Taipei ace Chao Fong-Pao, 11-9.

Counting his triumph in the Manila leg of the tour last June, Reyes has won three straight in the Asian Tour for a pacesetting 140 points.

## SPORTSWATCH

### Top Driver Challenge April 21-25

MOTOR sports enthusiasts who missed joining Leg 1 of the 2004 Cl Top Driver Challenge held last March 20 at the Time Zone Glorietta, Makati, will get another chance to be discovered for a racing career. Due to popular demand, organizers of the Cl Top Driver Challenge will hold another video challenge for a second wave of race driver hopefuls to be held at the Transhow in Megamall on April 21-25. Now in its second year, the Cl Top Driver Challenge, sponsored by Ford, Addict Mobile, Standard Insurance, Goodyear, Petron, Adidas, Ambi Pur Car, Oakley, Racegear Pitshop, Options Unlimited, Brother's Burger, Trapik.com, motorista.com.ph, K & N Filters and H & R suspension systems, aims to discover the next generation of motor sports stars from the grassroots level through four legs of increasingly difficult competition.

### Philta Age-Group Championships

REGISTRATION is ongoing for the Philta Age-Group Championships slated April 19-25 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. The Group 1 event will have competitions in the boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and 10-under unisex divisions. Deadline of entry is at 12 noon tomorrow to be followed by the draw at 2 p.m. Entry fee is P300.

### Transplant Games at Kidney Institute

THE KIDNEY Transplant Association of the Philippines Inc. (Kitap) will hold its 9th Philippine National Transplant Games (PNTG) on April 17-18 at the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI) in Quezon City and at the Philippine National Academy of Sports (PNAS-Ultra) in Pasig City. Day 1 will feature a patients forum to be conducted by Novartis Healthcare Philippines to be followed by indoor sports such as chess, darts, table tennis (NKTI atrium), badminton (Kalayaan Badminton Center) and bowling (AMF Puyat Bowling Lanes, Ever Commonwealth) while Day 2 will feature track and field, swimming and fun games at the PNAS Oval. This year's theme, "Keeping Up With The Challenges of a Meaningful Second Life," focuses on the continuing effort of Kitap to help its members cope with post transplant needs and on dissemination of information on kidney transplantation, organ donation and kidney-related disease and its prevention.

### PCC hosts 4-cock derby tonight

THE "PASAY Cockpit Cockers Association 4-Cock Derby" is set tonight at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit to be sponsored by Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Among the participants and their respective entry names are Jun Marasigan (JM Intruder), William Go (Cold Cup Jed and Joy); newspaper executive Rey Briones (Spartan's Blood); former PBA Commissioner Rudy Salud (Winning Time Jobo); Bobby Cabilion (Louie J); Lito Orillaza (LA 939 Jobo); Joey Lapid (Saluyan Jade); Pol Estrellado (Quinto Alas SP); Blandy Tolentino (BB San Pablo Heat); Manny Sy of Quezon Province (Oc-oc) and Jun Topacio (JT Emerald). PCC managers Osacer Gonzales, Eric de la Rosa and Butchoy Olano said that derby aficionados can expect 52 superb matches tonight. For inquiries, contact 843-1746, 843-1890 and 816-6750.

### Fierce rivalry continues at Roligon

FIERCE rivalry among the country's leading gamefowl breeders continues at Roligon Mega Cockpit today as the "Bakbakan Open National 8-Cock Derby" third round of eliminations sizzles at 6 p.m. Organized by the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB), this gigantic derby is being sponsored by Asvet, Vitarich Panabong and Thunderbird Platinum. NFGB president Ricoy Palmares reminded all the participants that the last day of eliminations (3-cock) will be held today. Early frontrunners in the Metro Manila leg who scored three wins each so far are Marcel Julao (MTJ Bros), Lito Castillo (KGBA RCF Razorback), Joseph Chua of Batangas (Jopete Kamay Na Kamay), Ucap president Raymond Velayo and LGBA president Boy Diaz (Arnismaster Apr. 13 and 15), Nelson Uy (MNSU Red Hawk) and hotelier Biboy Enriquez and Manolito Castelo (Tornado Dalubhasa I). Participants may contact Roligon at 833-2275, 833-1368, 852-9771 and 852-98129 (look for Shirley, Aubrey or Tiling) for details.

SEN. NEPTALI A. GONZALES SPORTS FOUNDATION
Presents
TENNIS EXTRAVAGANZA 2004
at
MANDALUYONG TENNIS CLUB
APRIL 25 - MAY 16, 2004

**NET SHOW: Rep. Neptali Gonzales (fourth from right) joins the organizers of the Tennis Extravaganza 2004 which will be held from April 25 to May 16 at the National Center for Mental Health Mandaluyong Tennis Club (MTC). From left, Mel Ilagan, Buddy Badillo, Rex Tantiongco, Christine Bernardo, MTC president Rudy Lo, Archie Tolentino, NAG chair Ruding Vicencio, Philbert Togle and tournament director Baby Gregorio.**

# Checkmating chess itself

**SPECTATOR**

*Al S. Mendoza*

REMEMBER Joseph Dumuk?

Oh, well, back in 1991, Joseph Dumuk was the guy who almost single-handedly orchestrated the tabulation of the medal tally in the SEA Games that we hosted that year. And you know what? Joseph did it practically manual.

If you can't believe that, then you can't also believe that FPJ is capable of beating GMA in the May 10 polls.

Anyway, here's Joseph Dumuk once again, writing me a letter to express his concern over the raging war in Philippine chess. No, not the war on the chessboard but off it.

"We are deeply bothered by the war wracking the leadership of chess in the country today," Joseph wrote.

We are all bothered because such war could lead to the disintegration of chess here—if it hasn't yet disintegrated. The gains earned by the establishment of the infant National Chess Federation of the Philippines in lieu of the abolished Philippine Chess Federation could yet go down the drain in a flash. I hate to say it but I honestly and strongly feel the sport that we love for its sheer cerebral qualities could be headed for the pits. And all because of a silly war spawned by a turf dispute bordering on the comical. And yet, it is seemingly being condoned by a leadership that is supposed to be steeped in the nuances of boardroom infighting instead of a chessboard endgame blitz that now threatens to checkmate the very foundations of the sport itself.

Anyway, here's Joseph Dumuk in his usual frankness and brevity:

*Dear Al,*

*Hi! How are you? I hope you and your family are fine. Happy Easter to you all! By the way, my family and I are doing fine also.*

*We write this "Appeal for Peace in Philippine Chess" as a lover of sports. We are deeply bothered by the "war" wracking the leadership of chess in the country today.*

*Coming on the heels of the successful 3rd edition of the La Union Open Chess Championships last month in the City of San Fernando—made historical by the ceremonial opening moves of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Asia's first Grandmaster, Eugene Torre—where will this battle of chess honchos bring us to?*

*We also achieved other gains in the sport. The group of 10 children, ages 8 to 14 years, that we had led in the 4th Asean Age Group Chess Tournament in Brunei last December, brought home seven medals—2 golds, 2 silvers and 3 bronzes. What will happen to the aspirations of these boys and girls if our chess leaders continue with their destructive quarrel?*

*We, therefore, appeal for peace and unity! If what could solve the impasse is an election of federation officers in the soonest time, then let it be! But we need to have this problem solved! The performance of our players in the World Championship, Chess Olympiad and SEA Games, our age group programs, etc., will be greatly affected if we do not.*

*Thank you very much and more power! God bless you.*

*Your friend,*
*JOSEPH A. DUMUK*
*Tournament Director, La Union Open Chess Championship*
*Region I Coordinator, National Chess Federation of the Philippines*

***

Coming no less from a top-ranking chess official of the land, this letter from dear Joseph should open the eyes of the NCFP leadership, if not the NCFP board.

The issue is very simple really. Who is who between executive director Toti Abundo and secretary general Sammy Estimo?

If you ask me, it's Sammy Estimo by virtue of the NCFP constitution, which provides that the secretary general is more powerful than the executive director.

There's a report that the NCFP board decided to strip Sammy Estimo of his powers pending an investigation of Sammy's alleged mismanagement of NCFP funds.

If true, why is Sammy Estimo still holding office at the NCFP headquarters? And he has just fired a memo ordering Toti Abundo to surrender all documents pertaining to NCFP and also requiring Toti Abundo to make a report on Toti's charges of game-fixing committed allegedly by Tanauan and Mandaluyong bets in Tagaytay City last month.

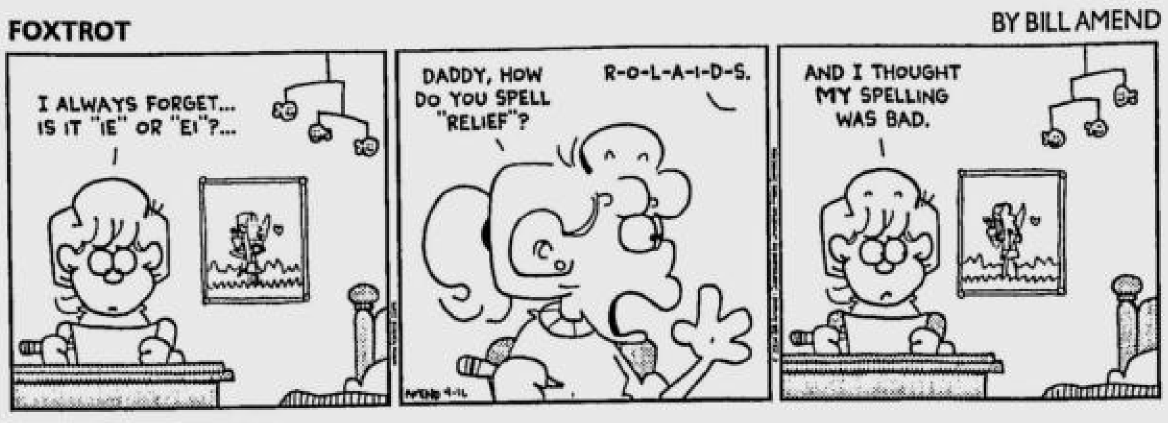
And then, lo and behold, NCFP president Mat Defensor issued a circular declaring a status quo "pending the outcome of the NCFP elections" set for July. That makes Sammy Estimo still the secretary general, a position that makes him more powerful than Toti Abundo. At least until July.

And so, where to now?
Stalemate? Zugzwang?
I need a drink.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

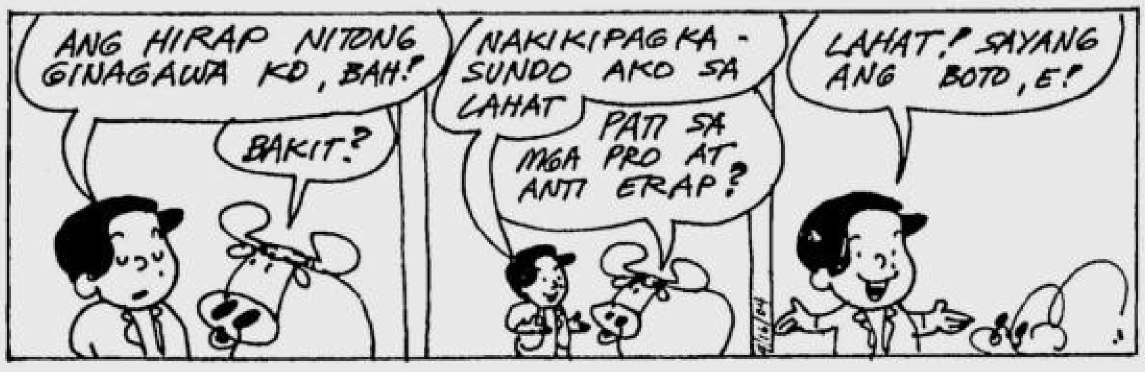
## FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I ALWAYS FORGET... IS IT "IE" OR "EI"?...
DADDY, HOW DO YOU SPELL "RELIEF"?
R-O-L-A-I-D-S.
AND I THOUGHT MY SPELLING WAS BAD.

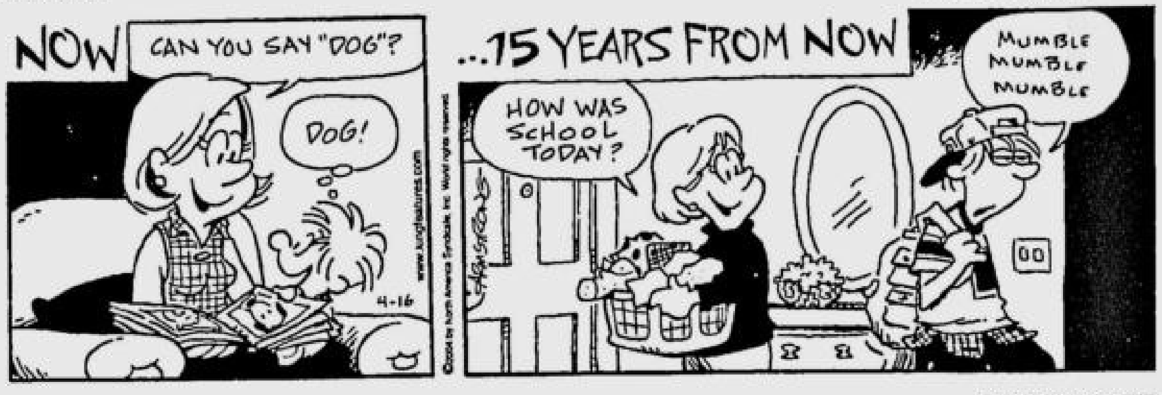
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG HIRAP NITONG GINAGAWA KO, BAH!
BAKIT?
NAKIKIPAGKA-SUNDO AKO SA LAHAT
PATI SA MGA PRO AT ANTI ERAP?
LAHAT! SAYANG ANG BOTO, E!

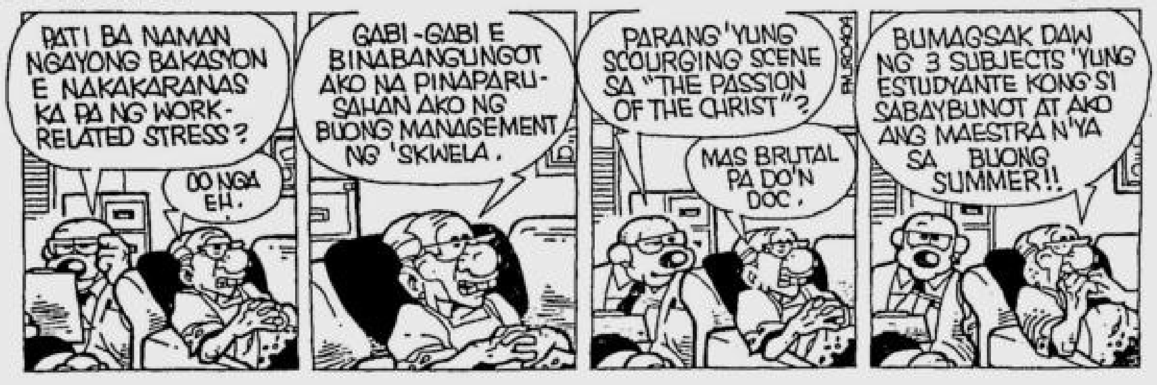
## MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


NOW
CAN YOU SAY "DOG"?
DOG!
4-16
...15 YEARS FROM NOW
HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY?
MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE

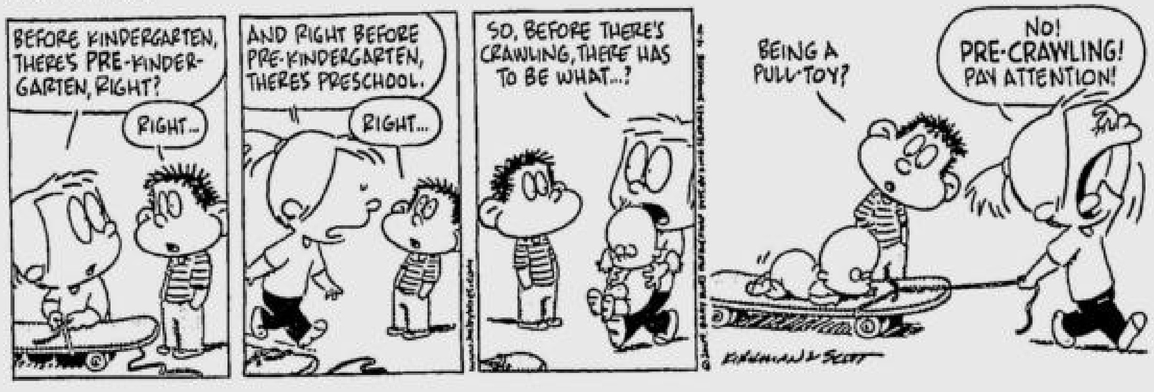
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PATI BA NAMAN NGAYONG BAKASYON E NAKAKARANAS KA PA NG WORK-RELATED STRESS?
OO NGA EH.
GABI-GABI E BINABANGUNGOT AKO NA PINAPARUSAHAN AKO NG BUONG MANAGEMENT NG 'SKWELA.
PARANG 'YUNG SCOURGING SCENE SA "THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST"?
MAS BRUTAL PA DO'N DOC.
BUMAGSAK DAW NG 3 SUBJECTS 'YUNG ESTUDYANTE KONG SI SABAYBUNOT AT AKO ANG MAESTRA N'YA SA BUONG SUMMER!!

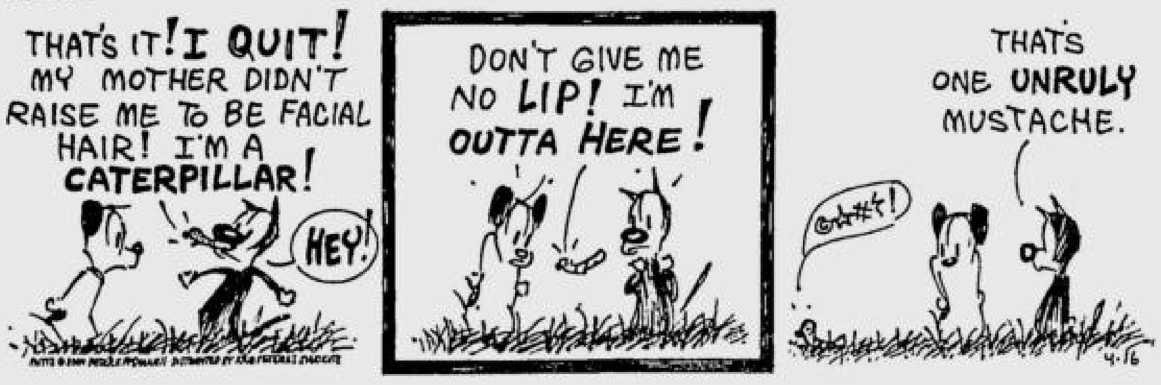
## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BEFORE KINDERGARTEN, THERE'S PRE-KINDERGARTEN, RIGHT?
RIGHT...
AND RIGHT BEFORE PRE-KINDERGARTEN, THERE'S PRESCHOOL.
RIGHT...
SO, BEFORE THERE'S CRAWLING, THERE HAS TO BE WHAT...?
BEING A PULL-TOY?
NO! PRE-CRAWLING! PAY ATTENTION!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

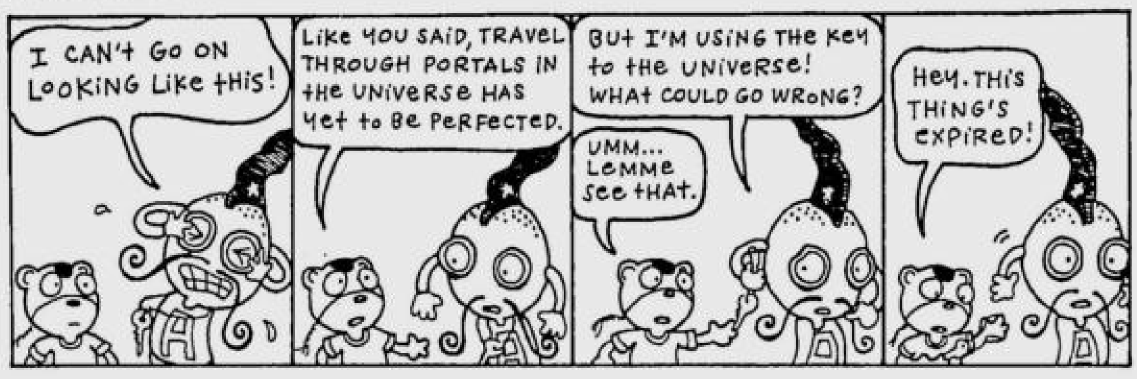
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THAT'S IT! I QUIT! MY MOTHER DIDN'T RAISE ME TO BE FACIAL HAIR! I'M A CATERPILLAR!
HEY!
DON'T GIVE ME NO LIP! I'M OUTTA HERE!
@#*!
THAT'S ONE UNRULY MUSTACHE.
4-16

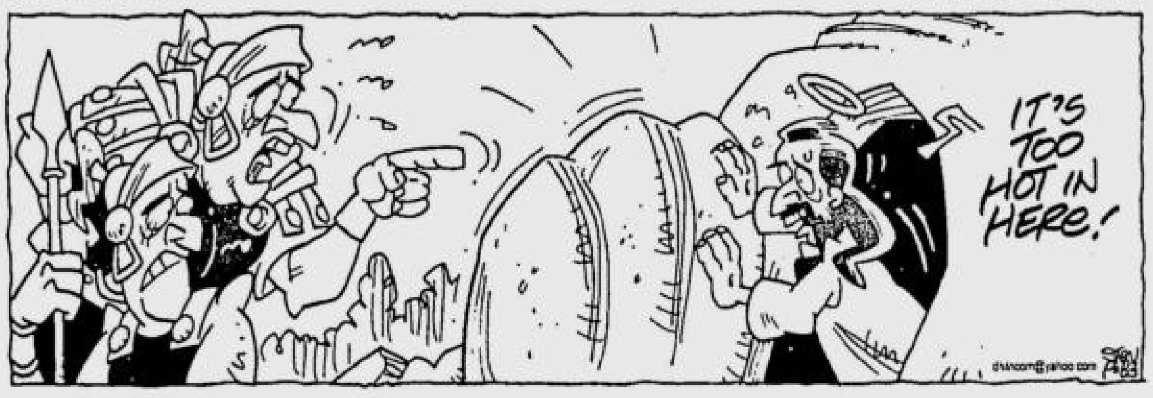
## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I CAN'T GO ON LOOKING LIKE THIS!
LIKE YOU SAID, TRAVEL THROUGH PORTALS IN THE UNIVERSE HAS YET TO BE PERFECTED.
BUT I'M USING THE KEY TO THE UNIVERSE! WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
UMM... LEMME SEE THAT.
HEY. THIS THING'S EXPIRED!

## DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


IT'S TOO HOT IN HERE!
divincom@yahoo.com

## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You are generous and kind. You're also tolerant and accepting of others. You have a wonderful sense of humor. Your understanding of the human heart promotes your success in every walk of life. You're loyal to family and friends. You always help the underdog. The year ahead could be one of the best years of your life!
**Birthdate of:** Ellen Barkin, actress; Charlie Chaplin, actor/director; Lukas Haas, actor.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** You might be coming on a bit too strong for others today. That's because you identify with your beliefs right now. (Don't try to coerce others into agreeing with you.)

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** You definitely need a little bit of time to be all by yourself today. You need to sort things out mentally so that you know what you're doing.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** Old friends demand your time now. It's good to keep in touch with people from your past. We all need to have a history with someone.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** Old business needs to be rehashed with a boss or a parent today. This is a good time to finish up whatever is still on your plate. Don't be too eager to jump into something new.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** Someone from afar could contact you today (or this week). Long-distance connections are happening everywhere for you now. Be friendly.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** This is a good day to wrap up old business connected with insurance matters, inheritances, wills, debt and taxes. It's boring red tape, but it has to be done.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** Discussions with others are quite intense today. This could be because an ex-partner has suddenly reappeared in your life. Remain confident. (It's not always wise to go back.)

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** This can be a highly productive day at work. Tackle old projects and finish prior business. Ignore delays and checks that are late in the mail. Just do what you can do.

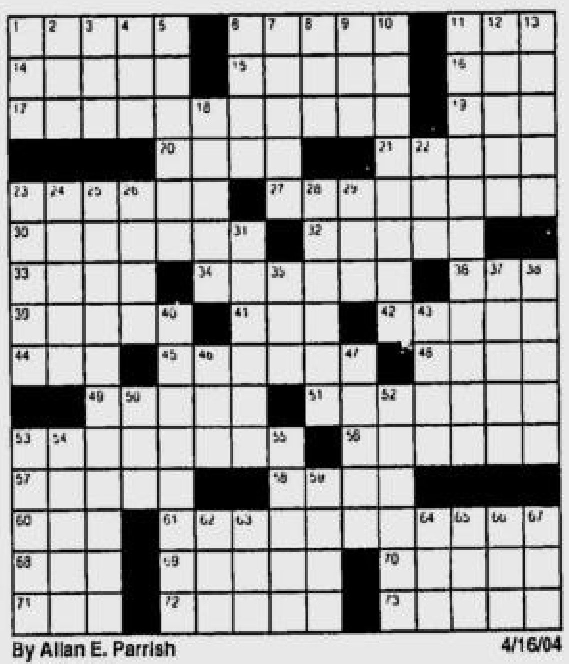
**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Old flames from your past could haunt you now. Always remember: Living well is the best revenge. (Look your best.)

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** This is a good day to finish family business and discuss domestic matters that have not yet been settled. (You can't bring in a new sofa until you get rid of the old one.)

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Pay your telephone bill. Take care of necessary car repairs and the like. Expect delayed and interrupted communications and transportation issues today. (Stay on the ball.)

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Your business know-how is sharp today. You might want to buy something that you've been thinking about getting for a long time now.

## DAILY CROSSWORD



By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

4/16/04

**ACROSS**
1 Service sector position
6 Astrologer Sydney
11 Dads
14 Chicago airport
15 Worth
16 Haughtily aloof
17 See 73A
19 Tavern by a tube stop
20 Whopper
21 Oteri of "SNL"
23 Toddler
27 Payback
30 Dodger
32 Repeat verbatim
33 Electrical unit
34 Corrects program errors
36 "JAG" network
39 Of a pelvic bone
41 By way of
42 __ Hall U.
44 Part of ASCAP
45 Go-betweens
48 Winter coat?
49 Miscue
51 Place for a stud
53 Lets off the hook
56 Ballpark frank
57 Actress Gaynor
58 Cry out loud
60 Greek letter
61 See 73A
68 Actor Chaney
69 Fragrant shrub
70 Vamoose!
71 H.S. subj.
72 Archie's better half
73 17A, 61A, 11D and 25D

**DOWN**
1 Gretchen of "Attraction"
2 Greek X
3 Artist Vermeer
4 Mork's planet
5 Outwitted
6 Roundish shape
7 Large wooden goblet
8 In the style of
9 Capek play
10 Disaster-relief outfit
11 See 73A
12 Legend maker
13 Ms. Thorndike
18 Despised
22 Success
23 Writer Gallant
24 Convex molding
25 See 73A
26 Pocket bread
28 Treat as identical
29 Wrinkly-faced, curly-tailed canine
31 Midnight rider
35 Open container
37 Ice-cream cake
38 Villainous look
40 City near Harrisburg
43 Agatha's contemporary
46 State off.
47 Like cut wood
50 Peri on "Frasier"
52 Having the worst b.o.
53 More than enough
54 American buffalo
55 Workout wetness
59 Incise deeply
62 Young goat
63 Actor Wallach
64 TV adjunct
65 Tax deferral letters
66 Tooth or toothpaste topper
67 Emma's twins?

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | E | A | P | S | ■ | A | B | L | E | ■ | A | L | A | S |
| A | G | L | E | T | ■ | S | L | E | D | ■ | T | U | B | A |
| M | A | D | L | Y | ■ | T | I | N | T | ■ | O | R | A | L |
| A | D | O | L | L | A | R | S | A | V | E | D | I | S | A |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | M | E | M | O | S | ■ | ■ | A | D | D | E | D |
| M | A | K | E | D | O | ■ | ■ | C | O | G | S | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| O | V | A | L | ■ | ■ | G | R | O | W | L | ■ | O | P | S |
| D | O | L | L | A | R | E | A | R | N | E | D | B | U | T |
| E | W | E | ■ | V | O | T | E | D | ■ | ■ | O | O | Z | E |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | F | I | Z | Z | ■ | ■ | P | I | G | E | O | N |
| O | A | S | I | S | ■ | ■ | B | E | I | N | G | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| S | E | L | D | O | M | V | I | C | E | V | E | R | S | A |
| A | G | O | G | ■ | B | E | L | L | ■ | A | R | I | E | S |
| K | I | T | E | ■ | A | T | K | A | ■ | D | E | P | T | H |
| A | S | S | T | ■ | S | O | O | T | ■ | E | L | S | I | E |

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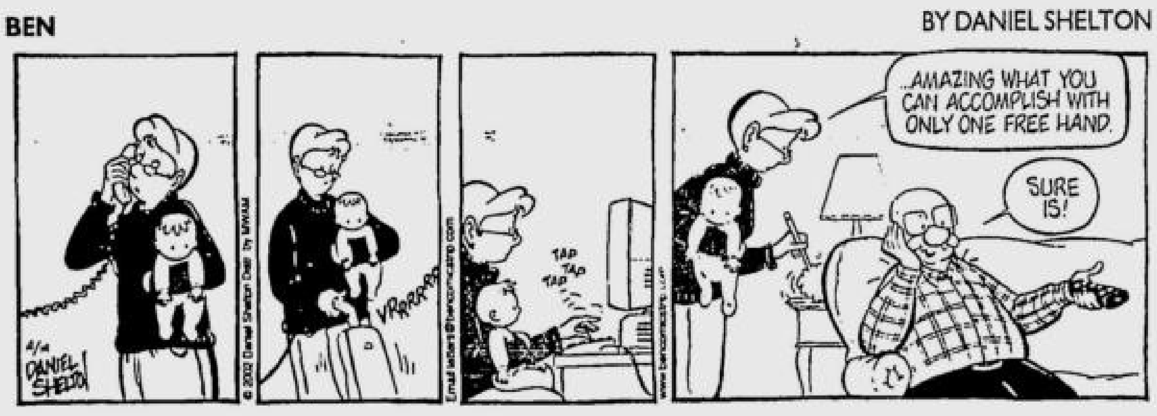
4/15/04

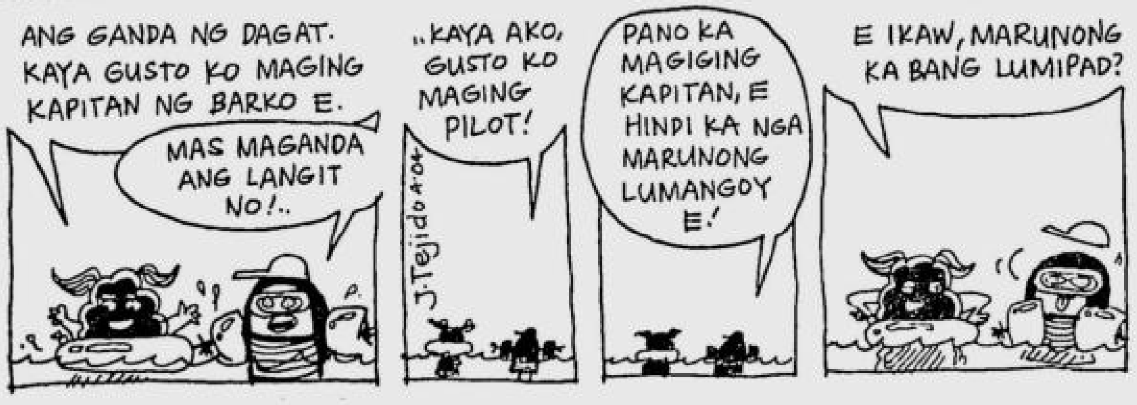
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DANIEL SHELTON
VRRRRRR
TAP TAP TAP
...AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH WITH ONLY ONE FREE HAND.
SURE IS!

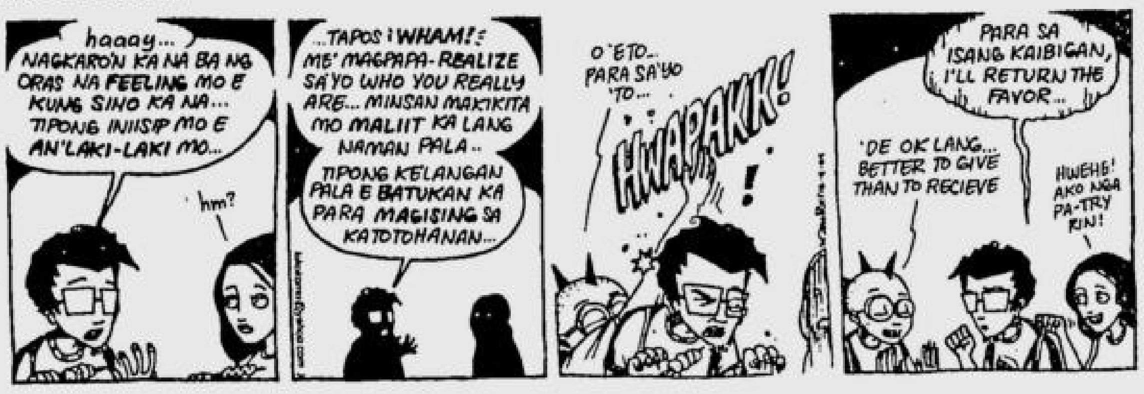
## MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG GANDA NG DAGAT. KAYA GUSTO KO MAGING KAPITAN NG BARKO E.
MAS MAGANDA ANG LANGIT NO!..
..KAYA AKO, GUSTO KO MAGING PILOT!
J.Tejido 4-04
PANO KA MAGIGING KAPITAN, E HINDI KA NGA MARUNONG LUMANGOY E!
E IKAW, MARUNONG KA BANG LUMIPAD?

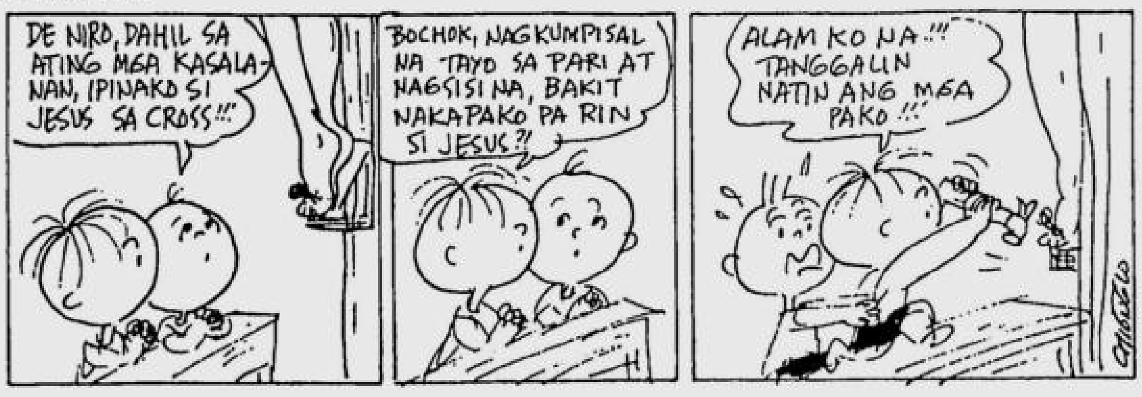
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haaay... NAGKARO'N KA NA BA NG ORAS NA FEELING MO E KUNG SINO KA NA... TIPONG INIISIP MO E AN'LAKI-LAKI MO...
hm?
...TAPOS ¡WHAM! ME' MAGPAPA-REALIZE SA'YO WHO YOU REALLY ARE... MINSAN MAKIKITA MO MALIIT KA LANG NAMAN PALA..
TIPONG KELANGAN PALA E BATUKAN KA PARA MAGISING SA KATOTOHANAN...
O'ETO.. PARA SA'YO 'TO...
HWAPAKK!
PARA SA ISANG KAIBIGAN, I'LL RETURN THE FAVOR...
'DE OK LANG... BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECIEVE
HWEHE! AKO NGA PA-TRY RIN!

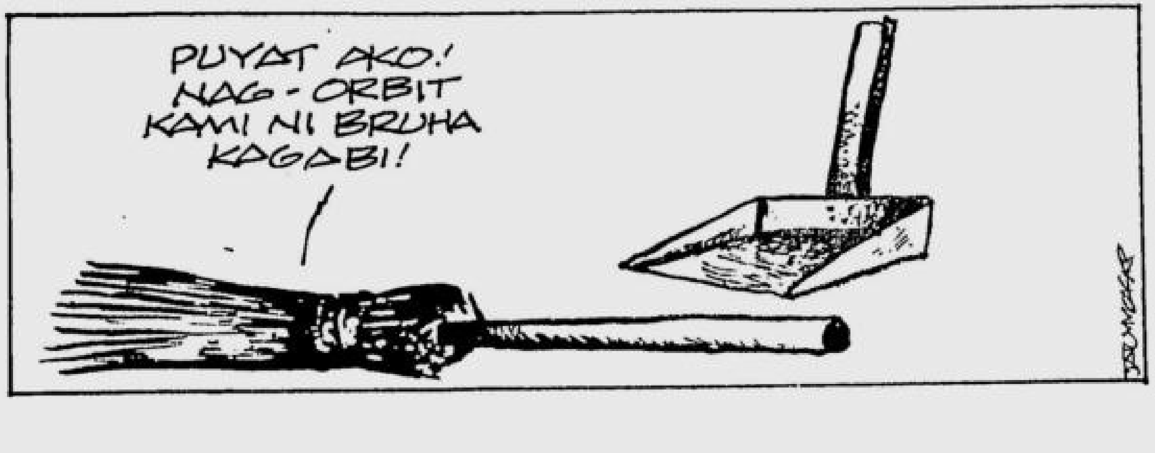
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, DAHIL SA ATING MGA KASALANAN, IPINAKO SI JESUS SA CROSS!!!
BOCHOK, NAGKUMPISAL NA TAYO SA PARI AT NAGSISI NA, BAKIT NAKAPAKO PA RIN SI JESUS?!
ALAM KO NA!!! TANGGALIN NATIN ANG MGA PAKO!!!
CHIONGLO

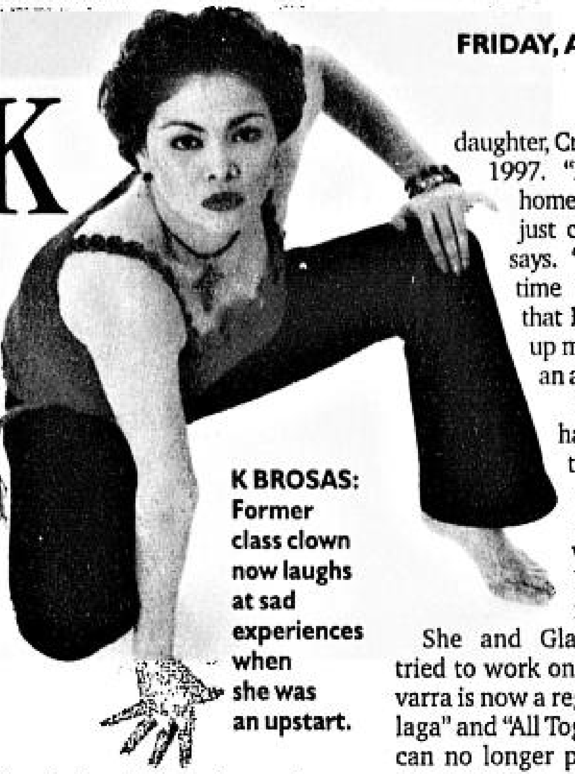
## TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PUYAT AKO! NAG-ORBIT KAMI NI BRUHA KAGABI!

# Comedienne with a K

**By Jocelyn Valle,** *Contributor*


**K BROSAS:** Former class clown now laughs at sad experiences when she was an upstart.

K BROSAS believes there's humor in tragedy.

"When I was nine or 10 years old," the 28-year-old singer-comedienne recalls, "I joined a contest on TV that was used to promote Dolphy's movie, 'Daddy's Little Angels.' I sang 'Why Me' by Irene Cara, live, while my two competitors lip-synched their song numbers."

For some strange reason, the two other girls were declared winners. K (full name, Carmela Brosas) was left in the cold. But the initial setback didn't deter the little upstart. Now she can only laugh about that sad experience.

"You know," she grins, "I've always been the class clown."

She then directed her energies toward theater, joining Peta's summer workshops, from the time she was 12 till she was 15.

K had always dreamed of becoming an actress but she also liked to sing. "When I was a kid, I would use the electric cord of our appliances like a mike," she remembers with a smile.

So it was through singing that she found the limelight. She started her career in the biz as a sing-along host at Nikolai bar in Quezon City. She was 18.

"It was different then," she says of the then burgeoning profession. "*Iginapang talaga namin 'yan.*"

At the same time, she regularly traveled for months to perform in countries like Thailand, Indonesia and Korea.

"Filipinos are more appreciative," she replies when asked to compare audiences here and in those countries. "The others couldn't understand the English lyrics I was singing so there was no interaction. Sometimes I would feel that I was the pipe-in music in the venue."

K stopped her travels when her daughter, Crystal, was born in 1997. "I would get so homesick that I would just come home," she says. "It was also the time when I thought that I would be giving up my dream of being an actress."

But as luck would have it, K joined the musical comedy group Gladys and the Boxers with K, which has Boy Abunda for manager.

She and Gladys have since tried to work on TV. Gladys Guevarra is now a regular on "Eat Bulaga" and "All Together Now," and can no longer perform with the group in its regular gigs in bars. Hence, the group is now called K with the Boxers. It has gigs four times a week and is due to release its sophomore album. K is also a mainstay in the sitcom "Idol Ko si Kap." She has also been part of "Eat Bulaga," the soap opera "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin" and the sitcom "Da Boy and Da Girl."

K shares that she's so much like her comic roles that she ends up not acting at all.

"It was a smooth transition from stage to TV," she says. "*Ang patawa ko naman kasi hindi* obvious," she avers.

Well, unlike most comedians who capitalize on their physical deficiencies, K is an attractive 5-foot-8 American mestiza. "*Hindi ako 'yung nababatukan ng bida,*" she points out.

When she has the time, K catches up on the latest movies in theaters. "Favorite *ko ang* horror *pero matatakutin ako,*" she laughs. "*Maingay akong manood, takot na takot ako. Hindi ko pa tapos panoorin 'yung* 'The Grudge' *dahil sa sobrang takot.*"

And without trying to, she gets to entertain the other moviegoers. "When I leave the theater, *nakangiti sila sa 'kin,*" she relates.

# Stars in 2004 Boracay Nestea Beach Volley

**SHOW STOPPER**

MODEL Rich Herrera, TV personalities Bianca Araneta and Hans Montenegro, and deejay Chinggay Andrada are just some of the celebrities who will grace the Boracay Nestea Beach Volley.

Among the activities is a photo contest, which is open to amateur and professional photographers and media photographers.

Photos submitted should capture the drama and excitement of the beach volleyball finals in Boracay. Winners will receive cash prizes.

The event, which is a culmination of volleyball action of teams from some of the country's colleges and universities, starts today until Sunday. Twenty-four teams from 19 schools will play for over half a million pesos worth of cash and prizes, as well as the honor of being this year's Nestea Beach Volley champ.

Representing Luzon are De La Salle University, UP Diliman, College of St. Benilde and Far Eastern University on the men's side, and College of St. Benilde, Adamson University, University of Baguio and Letran College in the women's division.

Teams from Iloilo Doctor's College, University of San Jose-Recoletos, Foundation University and University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos represent the Visayas, with women's teams from the University of the Visayas, Southwestern University, University of San Agustin and University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos.

Mindanao will be represented by teams from Mindanao State University, University of Mindanao-Tagum, University of Mindanao and Ateneo de Davao University for the men's division, and University of Mindanao-Tagum, Ateneo de Davao University, Holy Cross of Davao College and Mindanao State University in the women's division.

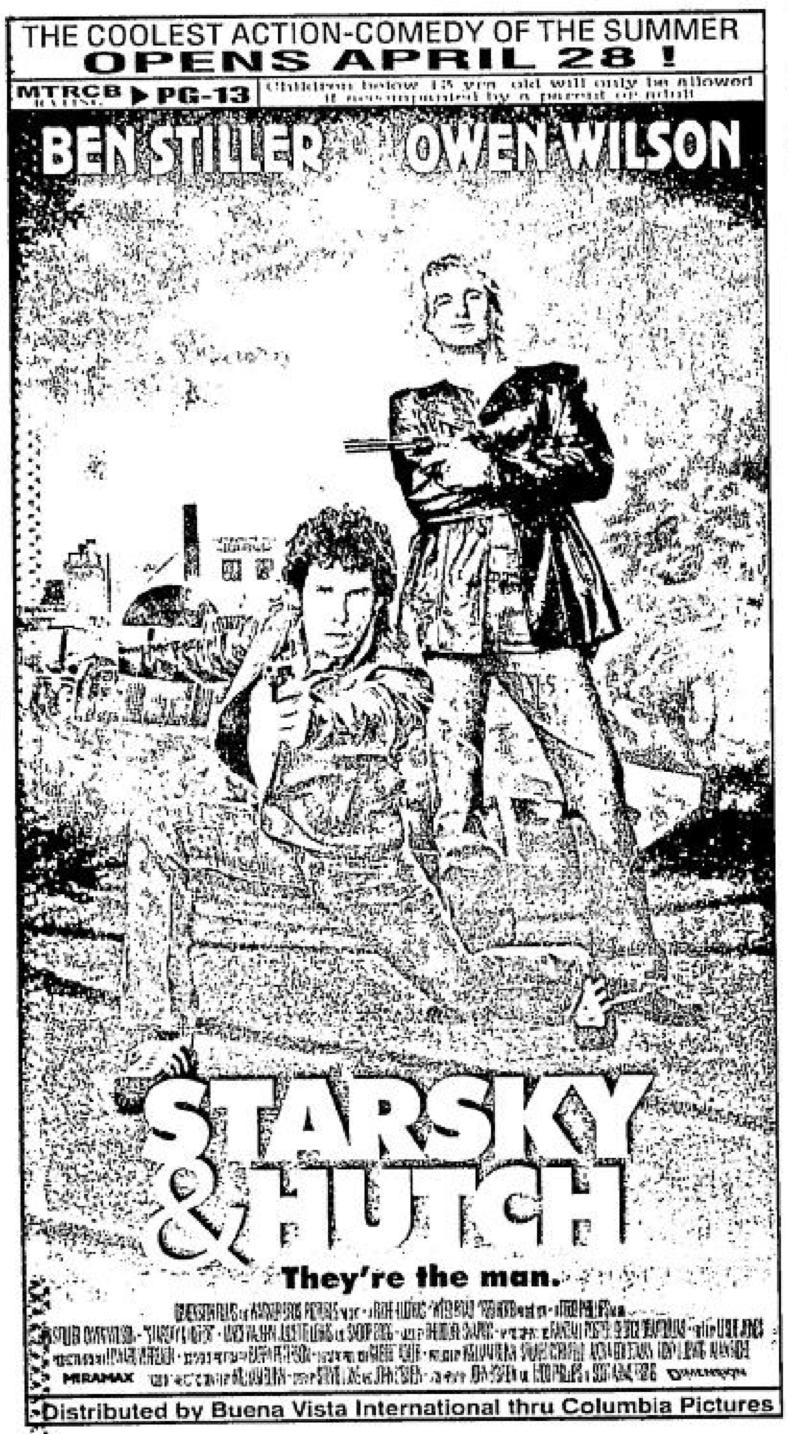
# Summer voice, stage lessons

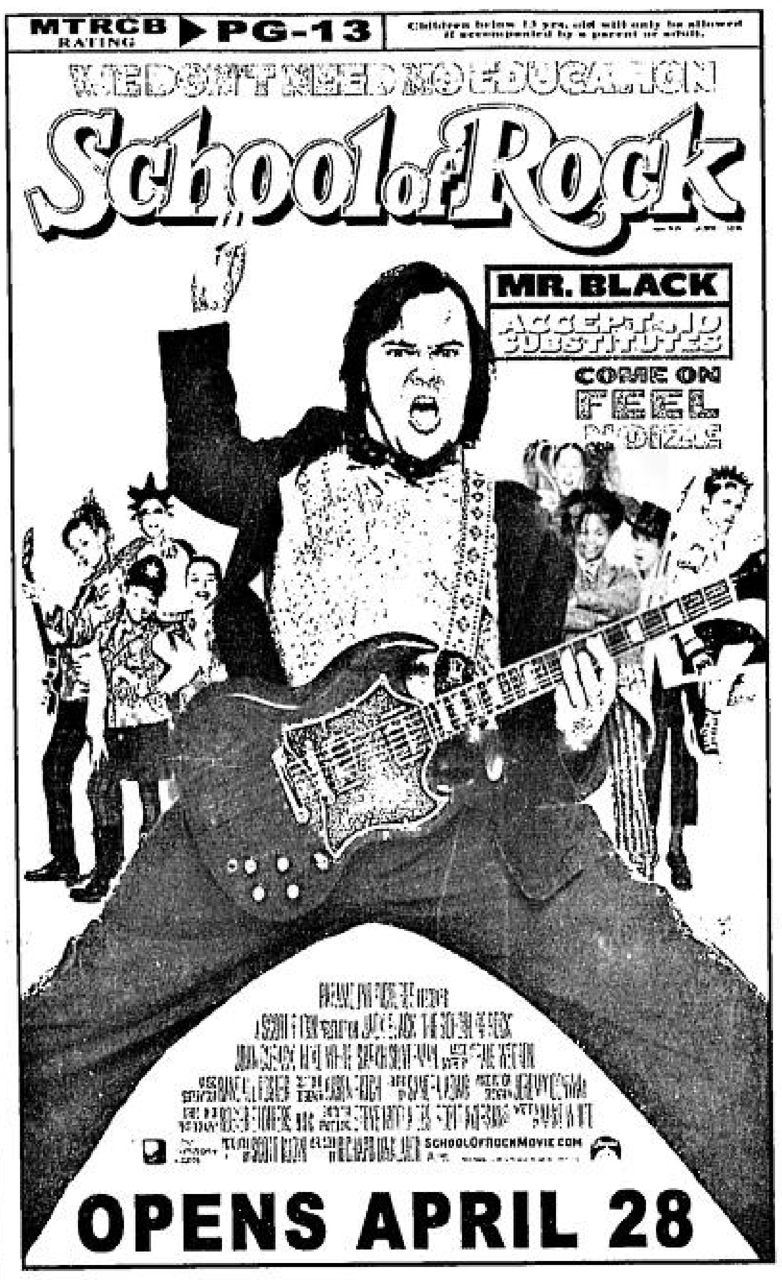
THE PHILIPPINE Music Training School (PMTS) is now accepting enrollees for its summer voice and stage classes.

Known for its high standards, PMTS offers voice and stage lessons for 25 sessions.

Registration and enrollment for classes are now ongoing at PMTS, 117-A S. Macaya St., Barangay Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, or call Ana Pacheco at 4540078.

Among the products of the PMTS are Lindsay Custodio, Marissa, Cheliza Padilla, Ynez Veneracion, Lianne Loren, Rachelle Ann Reyes, Ma. Arleen Cagas (1987 Bulilit Tanghalan ng Kampeon), Ana Pacheco and Lyka Vazquez.


THE COOLEST ACTION-COMEDY OF THE SUMMER
OPENS APRIL 28 !
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
BEN STILLER OWEN WILSON
STARSKY & HUTCH
They're the man.
MIRAMAX
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
WE DON'T NEED NO EDUCATION
School of Rock
MR. BLACK
ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES
COME ON FEEL THE NOIZE
SCHOOLOFROCKMOVIE.COM
OPENS APRIL 28

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.
SASAPIAN KA NG MULTO NGAYON.
Wala pang mas nakakasindak dito!
the ghost is invited to dinner at your house.
the Uninvited
Jeon Ji-Hyun (the star of My Sassy Girl)
Park Shin-Yang

More movies on pages B14, B15 and C2.

SM CINEMA
what to watch
Suspense
TWISTED
Newly promoted police inspector Jessica Shepad (Ashley Judd) is searching for a serial killer, and is shocked to discover that men she has recently slept with are the victims. The investigation becomes more and more twisted as her partner (Andy Garcia) behaves strangely, and the police commissioner (Samuel L. Jackson) is being asked to remove her from the investigation as she is a prime suspect. As all the clues point towards her, Jessica gets caught up in an intricate web of mystery closing in on her
now showing
JUDD JACKSON GARCIA
TWISTED
Subject to MTRCB Rating
DIAL 8339999 for screening schedules
up next
April 21 Subject to MTRCB Rating
April 28 Subject to MTRCB Rating
May 25 Subject to MTRCB Rating
To be announced Subject to MTRCB Rating
Give the Gift of Entertainment. Give the SM Movie Cards.
Get Complimentary Passes when you buy in bulk. For orders, call 831-7000 local 2680 to 2682.

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG 13 | PARENTS ARE STRONGLY CAUTIONED IN BRINGING ALONG KIDS BELOW 10 YEARS BECAUSE OF SOME SCENES THAT MIGHT STRESS THEIR SENSIBILITIES.
NOW SHOWING NATIONWIDE
"TWO THUMBS WAY UP! A GREAT EPIC FILM."
-Ebert & Roeper
A MEL GIBSON FILM
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
JIM CAVIEZEL
www.thepassionofthechrist.com
Soundtrack available on SONY MUSIC
20th Century Fox

# Heart Evangelista in 'Puso ng Bayan'

TEENAGE actress Heart Evangelista will launch her fans club through a series of mall shows.

Called "Puso ng Bayan," the show will have its first stop at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall on Sunday.

The actress will be signing autographs and posing for pictures with her fans who want to get up close and personal with Heart.

On April 24, the show will be at SM Bicutan, at SM Fairview on April 25, Ever Commonwealth on May 1, Ever Ortigas on May 2, SM Dasmariñas on May 22, SM Southmall on May 29, and SM North Edsa on June 20.

"Puso ng Bayan" is made possible with the help of Smart, Kotex, Yoshinoya, ABE International College of Business and Accountancy, Skechers USA and Nestlé.

silverline entertainment
bench/
in association with
SKECHERS
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST | TAKING LIVES | TAKING LIVES | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>PAYCHECK<br>1:50, 4:15, 6:40, 9:05, 11:30 | CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN |
| 2 | PETER PAN | THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST | PETER PAN | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST<br>12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20 | DIABLO |
| 3 | TAKING LIVES | PETER PAN | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST<br>[illegible] | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>PETER PAN<br>1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30 | 50 FIRST DATES |
| 4 | TWISTED | MASIKIP SA DIBDIB | UNINVITED | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>TWISTED<br>1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30 | MASIKIP SA DIBDIB |
| 5 | PAYCHECK | | BIG FISH | GUARANTEED SEATS<br>TAKING LIVES<br>2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 | THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST |
| 6 | | | PAYCHECK | | |
| 7 | | | TWISTED | | |

| | GB1<br>GREENBELT 1 |
|---|---|
| 1 | PETER PAN<br>12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30 |
| 2 | BIG FISH<br>1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30 |

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Editor Louie C. Camino

**BEAUTY BETS.** Bb. Pilipinas Universe Maricar Balagtas (center), with Princess Jasmine Tiongson, second runner-up, and Tracy Ann Javelona, first runner-up. JIMMY DY

# Bb. Pilipinas-Universe: 'Our Victory is at hand'

By Marinel R. Cruz

REIGNING Binibining Pilipinas Universe Maricar Balagtas is confident she will bag the title, which has eluded the Philippines for 30 years, since Margie Moran was crowned Miss Universe in 1973.

"Our victory is at hand," said Balagtas, who finally won the Bb. Pilipinas Universe title the third time she joined the beauty search.

"It has been my biggest dream to represent the country. I will bring all your prayers with me to the competition," she said.

Balagtas beat 25 other candidates in the Bb. Pilipinas pageant at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City last March 6.

The beauty from Plaridel, Bulacan, was only 17 the first time she joined the Bb. Pilipinas search. She joined again when she was 19, but bagged only third place. That same year, Balagtas represented the country and won the Miss Globe title in Turkey. Last March, Balagtas finally bagged the Bb. Pilipinas-Universe title.

In preparation for the Miss Universe pageant, Balagtas will spend a month in Colombia where she would undergo a month-long personality development course. She will also be taught how to walk, do her own makeup and answer questions with confidence. She left for Colombia yesterday.

The pageant will be held in Ecuador on June 1.

"I'm quite nervous," Balagtas told INQUIRER Entertainment during the send-off party hosted for her yesterday by the Bb. Pilipinas Charities Inc. "The competition is only a few weeks ahead, but I know I can make it."

## Miss Philippines

Meanwhile, 24 Miss Philippines contestants were presented to the local and international press last Wednesday at the Carousel Gardens in Mandaluyong City.

Coronation night of the Miss Philippines pageant will be held on May 2 at the UP Diliman, Quezon City. The winner will represent the country to the Miss Earth 2004 contest in November.

The Miss Philippines search takes pride in being the only beauty competition that focuses on various means of preserving the environment. The competition was launched in 2000 by Carousel Productions, headed by Ramon Monzon.

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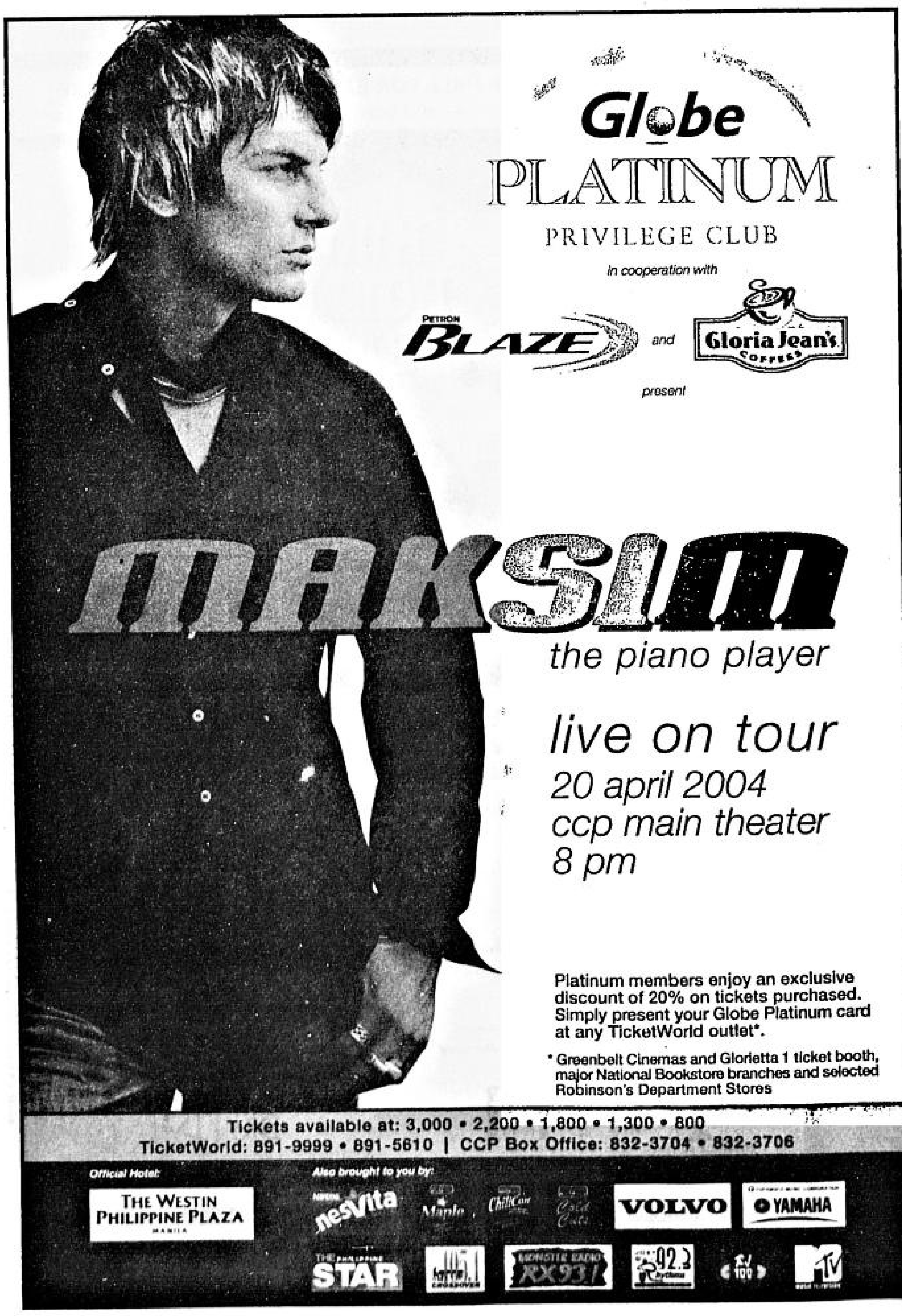

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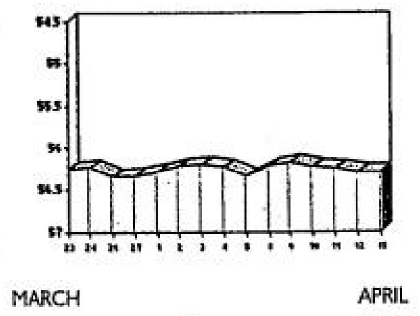

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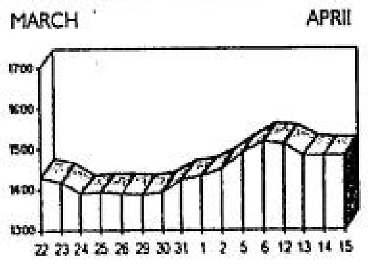
### STOCK MARKET

## Stocks flat, dull trade seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B7)

SHARES closed almost flat yesterday as profit-taking slowed, with traders saying trade would likely remain dull until next month's national elections.

Most investors have already taken positions ahead of the elections and good first-quarter profits have been factored in prices, traders said.

The Philippines goes to the polls on May 10 to elect a new president, vice president, Congress, Senate and thousands of local officials. The race for the presidency is boiling down to incumbent Macapagal-Arroyo and political neophyte Fernando Poe Jr.

The Philippine stock index inched down 0.23 point or 0.02 percent to 1,483.20 points, leaving the market up by just 2.83 percent so far this year.

The index has lost 2.2 percent in the past three sessions.

"This may signal the tail-end of the correction already," said Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc.

Other markets in the region also posted losses, as they tracked the decline in Wall Street on worries that the US Federal Reserve may hike its policy rates sooner than expected and send a wave of interest rate hikes across the globe. Value turnover in the local market narrowed to P402.11 million against Wednesday's P500.184 million. ***Reuters***

### INTEREST RATES

April 15, 2004-MART1 Rates

| Benchmark Interest Rates | MART1 15-Apr-04 | MART1 14-Apr-04 |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Month | 7.9732 | 7.9714 |
| 3 Months | 8.0673 | 8.0587 |
| 6 Months | 8.9393 | 9.0473 |
| 1 Year | 9.4467 | 9.7243 |
| 2 Years | 10.3089 | 10.4857 |
| 3 Years | 10.7533 | 11.1083 |
| 4 Years | 11.1117 | 11.3033 |
| 5 Years | 11.6257 | 11.7607 |
| 7 Years | 12.1 | 12.1923 |
| 10 Years | 12.4554 | 12.4893 |
| 20 Years | 12.9133 | 12.9179 |
| 25 Years | 13.1733 | 13.2125 |

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

By Doris C. Dumlao

**THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday kept its overnight interest rates unchanged after the peso firmed up to its highest level in two months earlier this week.**

In its monthly policy meeting yesterday, the BSP's Monetary Board decided to maintain its overnight borrowing rate at 6.75 percent and the lending rate at 9 percent.

The BSP has not changed its benchmark rates since a cut of 25 basis points on July 2 last year.

Although the rates were unchanged since then, there was a virtual tightening in August when the Monetary Board lifted the tiering scheme for banks' placements in the BSP.

"In its assessment of the prevailing economic and financial conditions, the Monetary Board concluded that the current monetary policy stance remains appropriately supportive of the economy's low-inflation path and the macroeconomic environment remains generally conducive to credit demand," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in a briefing after the board meeting yesterday.

However, Buenaventura said the BSP would continue to be cautious of other developments that could affect consumer prices.

The BSP uses an inflation rate-targeting model in setting its overnight policy rates, which in turn are used by banks as benchmark in pricing their loans.

"The board is of the view that cost-side factors continue to represent the principal sources of risk to the inflation outlook. These factors include the recent increase in transport fares, proposed adjustment in utility charges and the observed calls for increases in the minimum wage rate by various labor groups," Buenaventura said.

"Inflationary pressures resulting from cost-side factors are largely outside the influence of monetary policy, and therefore do not require action from monetary authorities," he added.

The neutral policy stance for the month did not come as a surprise to the financial market.

"With the recent relaxation of pressures on the exchange rate, there is less likelihood of any reserve rate hike or even an (overnight) interest rate hike. There's more pressure if the peso were weakening," said outgoing HSBC country treasurer John McGowan.

As a preemptive response to inflationary threats 'arising from the peso-dollar volatility, the BSP raised last February the liquidity reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and non-banks with quasi-banking functions by 2 percentage points.

### BEVERAGES VENTURE

## SMC investing $45M in China

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. yesterday said it would invest $45 million in a non-alcoholic beverages venture in southern China.

San Miguel said it had secured a license to manufacture the beverages, including tea and juice, at Shunde in China's Guangdong province.

A statement issued by the company said that San Miguel won a business license from the Industrial and Commercial Administrative Bureau of Shunde District in Foshan city and the Foreign Funded Enterprise Registration Administration.

A new company, San Miguel (Guangdong) Foods and Beverages Co. Ltd., would handle the new venture, it added.

The license will allow the company to operate in Shunde for 50 years, or until March 2054, and to avail itself of incentives and preferential treatment from relevant government bureaus.

The new company will be housed beside the Shunde Brewery. The new facility will produce non-alcoholic beverages such as tea and juices.

San Miguel headquarters in Ortigas

San Miguel views the Shunde investment as strategic to the company's long-term growth prospects. Shunde's infrastructure and business-friendly incentives will not only provide San Miguel with strategic access to the huge market but also the opportunity to cash in on China's impressive economic growth.

The food and beverage facility in Shunde is not San Miguel's first venture in China. The company has existing breweries in that country namely: Guangzhou San Miguel Brewery Co., Ltd.; San Miguel Shunde Brewery Co., Ltd.; San Miguel Bada Baoding Brewery Co., Ltd. and the San Miguel Brewery Hong Kong, Ltd.

San Miguel has a long-standing business relationship with the Chinese people since the founding of the Hong Kong brewery in 1948.

The company also produces and markets, both locally and for export, glass containers in China through its Zhaoqing San Miguel Glass Co. It also operates a crown line and plastic crates and pallets in San Miguel Shunde Packaging Co. *With a report from Reuters*

## Peso expected to sustain gains

THE PESO is likely to sustain its recovery whoever wins the Presidential race on May 10, as the market believes the political risks have already fizzled out.

This was the assessment of top HSBC Philippines treasury officials, who noted the local currency may rally back to the levels prior to the escalation of election-related jitters last year.

Newly appointed HSBC Philippines treasurer Wick Veloso said that a closer look at the foreign exchange levels last year would show that the peso started depreciating in 2003 when political noises ahead of the presidential polls intensified.

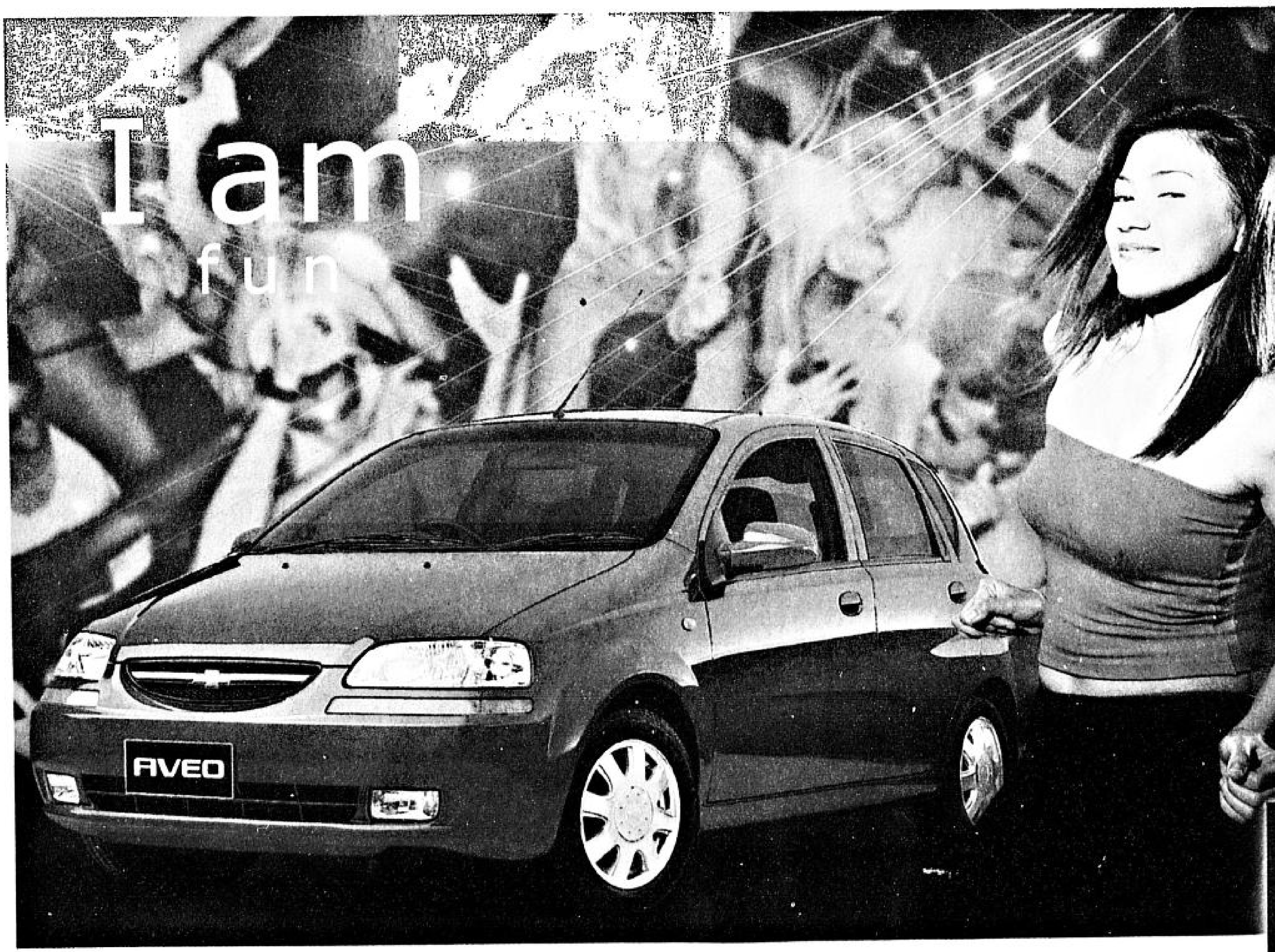
The peso traded at the 53 to 54 level until July last year, when it started weakening to the 55 level. The peso further fell to the 56 level this year.

Only last month, the peso hit a record low of 56.45 to the dollar, but it has bounced back to the 55 levels this week.

Yesterday, the peso closed at 55.86 or a bit lower than Wednesday's 55.80, consolidating after a three-day rally.

Total value turnover at the Philippine Dealing System yesterday stood at $228.4 million. A lot of banks were still scrambling to unload dollar holdings as the momentum continued to favor the peso.

Outgoing HSBC treasurer John McGowan said the peso had been rebounding against the US dollar due to a confluence of positive factors, foremost of which was the belief that the political risk premium in the country had diminished. *Doris C. Dumlao*



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# NTC to require cell phone dealers, shop owners to register

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has drafted two circulars that would require all cellular phone dealers and repair shop owners to register with the commission and secure a permit before they could operate legally.

Requiring prior registration with the commission would help the government crack down on illegal activities like the unblocking of stolen cellular phones, according to Ronald Solis, NTC chair.

Solis said that before the commission issues the two circulars at the end of the first semester, it would first conduct a series of public hearings starting this month.

There are an estimated 22 million cellular phone subscribers in the country. No one knows how many are using stolen phones.

The draft circulars prescribed a penalty of P5,000 for each violation. Among the violations listed are the sale or trading of stolen phones and parts, unblocking of cellular phones, and operating without an NTC permit.

The commission said it would suspend, cancel or revoke the permit of companies that would violate the circular.

Solis said that the circulars would also help the NTC stem the increase of cellular phone-related fraud.

He said the NTC could have done better had the telecom firms not asked the courts to prevent the commission from enforcing a 2000 order requiring the registration of all SIM (subscriber identification module) cards.

"I hope that this time around, the telcos would cooperate and allow the NTC to do its job of regulating the industry," Solis said.

In the draft circular, the NTC would collect a filing fee of P180, a permit fee of P1,400 and an inspection fee of P720 for the cellular phone repair shops and P1,000 for cellular phone dealers. The NTC permit is valid for a year and must be renewed annually.

Dealers would be asked to register with the NTC their inventory of mobile phones and SIM cards. They must also submit a monthly sales and stock reports.

The NTC added that dealers must not engage in the trading of stolen or smuggled phones and SIM cards while repair shops must not unblock stolen phones.

Unlike cellular phone theft, there is no law that penalizes the unblocking of stolen mobile phones.

Solis said the commission had been trying to address cellular phone theft but some of its efforts have been stymied by the phone companies themselves.

Phone companies have reasoned out that the registration of pre-paid subscribers would entail costs that they refused to carry.

# Farmers slam high cost of hybrid rice

**By Christine Gaylican**

SMALL farmers are up in arms over the high cost of planting hybrid rice which the Department of Agriculture is currently pushing.

Members of the National Rice Farmers Council on Tuesday said that the hybrid program, or the GMA Rice Program, is actually emptying their pockets due to the high input cost associated with the use of hybrid rice seeds.

"The use of hybrid seeds require the use of expensive commercial fertilizers and seeds, and this has cut down the potential income of farmers," farmer-leader Cenon Nolasco said in Filipino during a press conference.

A farmer is estimated to spend some P20,000 to P30,000 per hectare every cropping season as compared to the planting of traditional rice varieties estimated at P10,000 to P14,000 per hectare.

He also pointed out that there is now a monopoly of hybrid seed distribution among private companies.

"Unlike the planting of traditional rice varieties, hybrid rice farming requires new seeds every cropping season," said Nolasco of the Pambansang Kalipunan ng mga Magsasaka sa Kanayunan. "This makes the farmers vulnerable to high costs."

Jimmy Tadeo, president of the National Farmers Rice Council, pointed out that the farmers are concerned with the environmental implications of using hybrid seeds as they tend to require great amounts of fertilizers.

Tadeo and the other farmers are supporting the application of the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) which, they claimed, could raise rice yields by 50 percent or more.

According to Philippine Greens representative Roberto Verzola, the SRI method could be applied on any seed variety and would require the use of compost instead of chemical fertilizers.

"The SRI method would also (require) the transplant of very young (8 to 10 days old) seedlings and abandon the traditional practice of flooding rice fields throughout the growing season," Verzola explained.

He noted that SRI has been applied in some parts of the Philippines, yielding an average of 6 tons per hectare compared to the national average yield of 3 tons per hectare.

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# MVP sees Orange

## COCKTALES

*Victor C. Agustin*

MANUEL V. Pangilinan was in Bangkok during the Holy Week to explore the possibility of First Pacific, in partnership with the PLDT Group, acquiring a minority stake in TA Orange, Thailand's third largest but money-losing mobile phone company.

Pangilinan, who is both First Pacific managing director and PLDT chair, would only say that he was "exploring investment opportunities" in Thailand when a Filipino journalist bumped into him in Bangkok international airport on Good Friday.

TA Orange's foreign partner, Orange of France, had just sold a 39-percent stake to its Thai partner, TelecomAsia PCL, for just one baht after pouring $550 million in the three-year-old cellular company.

Orange of France still has 10 percent left in the venture, but it is likely that the reduced stake will eventually be disposed of as well.

The French divestment paved the way for TA Orange to refinance the joint venture's 32-billion baht debt and push a plan to raise 6 billion baht from the Thai partner to fund network expansion.

Like PLDT, TA Orange's principal, TelecomAsia, operates a fixed-line phone network in Bangkok and suburbs.

If First Pacific and PLDT succeed in acquiring a stake in TA Orange, expect a Thai version of the bruising Globe-Smart war.

Why? The leading Thai cellular phone company, Advanced Info Service PCL, is 22 percent owned by Globe Telecom partner, Singapore Telecom.

Advanced Info Service PCL, incidentally, is controlled by the family of Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

### 'Fine' judges

THE SUPREME Court has fined four Baguio Regional Trial Court judges for the "undue delay(s)" in the disposition of cases, two years after a fellow judge denounced the irregularities, including rigging of raffles, drinking and gambling in chamber, and womanizing.

The high court has yet to publicly release the decision pending an appeal from the penalized judges but a copy obtained by Cocktales identified the four as Antonio Esteves, Clarence Villanueva, Edilberto Claraval and Antonio Reyes.

The four were meted fines ranging from P10,000 to P20,000 for failing to decide on dozens of cases submitted for decision and failing to resolve motions within the prescribed period.

The backlog was unearthed after the Supreme Court ordered a judicial audit following the denunciation by Judge Ruben Ayson.

It was not immediately clear as to what had happened to the investigation regarding the graver charges raised by Ayson against his colleagues

### Evanescent

EVA Air, one of the regional airlines accused by Philippine Airlines of "poaching" on the Philippine market, has gotten stingy with its frequent-flier privileges.

Starting July 1, it would now take 20,000 frequent flier miles, instead of the current 15,000, to upgrade an economy class ticket to the popular Evergreen Deluxe section for passage to America and Europe.

### Heard through the grapevine

THE FILIPINO minority partners of PriceSmart, not the Americans, are calling it quits and have formally asked the San Diego headquarters to buy them out of the warehouse chain.

*(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

# Structure for 2nd Asian Bond Fund OKd

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

TEN months after the launch of the landmark $1-billion Asian Bond Fund, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and 10 other central banks in the East Asia and Pacific region have already started working on the second ABF, with its structure already approved.

The second ABF or ABF2, also an initiative of the Executives' Meeting of East Asia and Pacific Central Banks (EMEAP), will be invested in local currency-denominated bonds of sovereign and quasi-sovereign issuers.

ABF-1 was fully invested in US dollar-denominated bonds issued by sovereign and quasi-sovereign issuers in these EMEAP economies.

The ABF seeks to perk up the bond markets in the region through investing in Asian bonds.

"The BSP believes that the impact of the ABF-2 in further developing the Philippine domestic bond market will be significant," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in a statement yesterday.

With the framework for ABF-2 now in place, the next tasks are to determine the fund size and to raise the money needed for investments. The BSP contributed $100 million to ABF-1 which was launched in June 2003.

"The EMEAP group continues to consult with market practitioners on the design and structure of the ABF-2, cognizant of the need to limit the size of the total investment so as not to crowd out private investors," he added.

The other members of the EMEAP group are the Reserve Bank of Australia, People's Bank of China, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Bank Indonesia, Bank of Japan, Bank of Korea, Bank Negara Malaysia, Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Monetary Authority of Singapore and Bank of Thailand.

EMEAP, in a separate statement, said its member-economies could leverage on the interest and momentum generated from the collective investment in ABF-2 to further develop their domestic bond markets.

After an initial study of the various designs and structures for the ABF-2, the recommended framework consisted of two components: a Pan-Asia Bond Index Fund (PAIF) and a Fund of Bond Funds.

The PAIF is intended to be a single bond index fund investing in local currency denominated bonds in EMEAP economies. It aims to act as a convenient and cost-effective investment fund for regional and international investors who wish to have a well-diversified exposure to bond markets in Asia.

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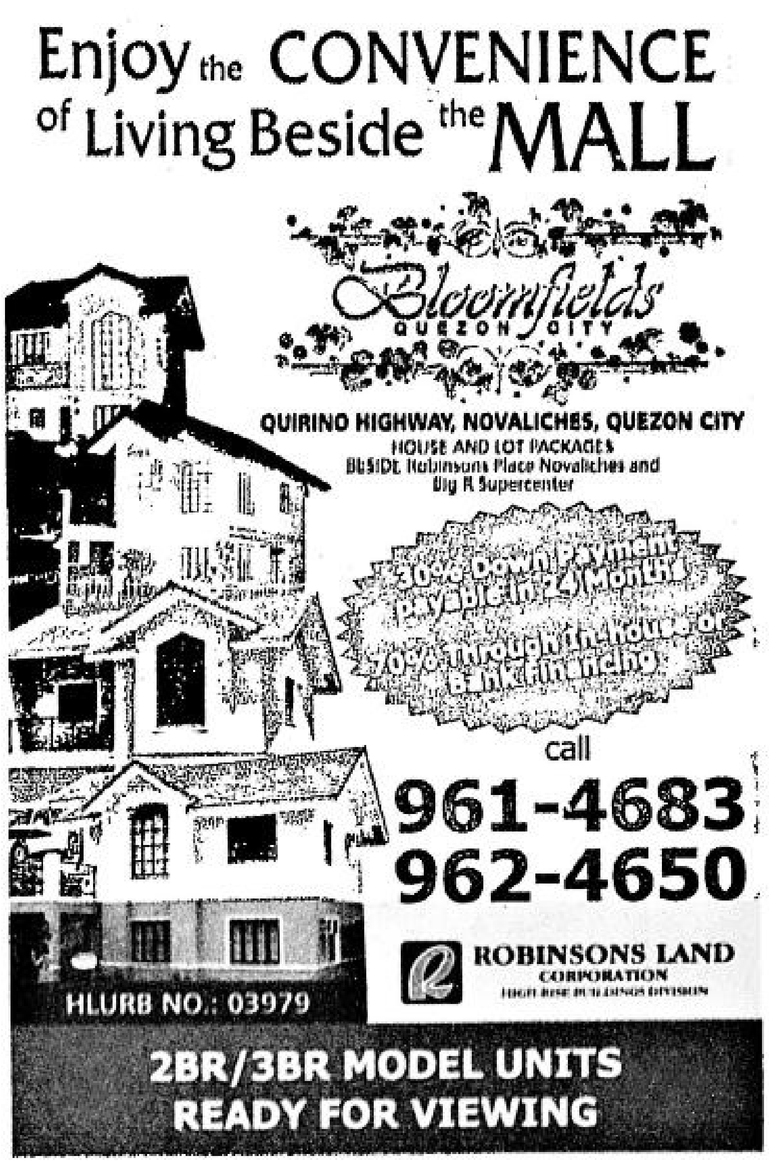
| Managed Fund - Peso | 1.16436 | 1.16347 |
| Bond Fund - US Dollar | 1.0160 | 1.0112 |

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission



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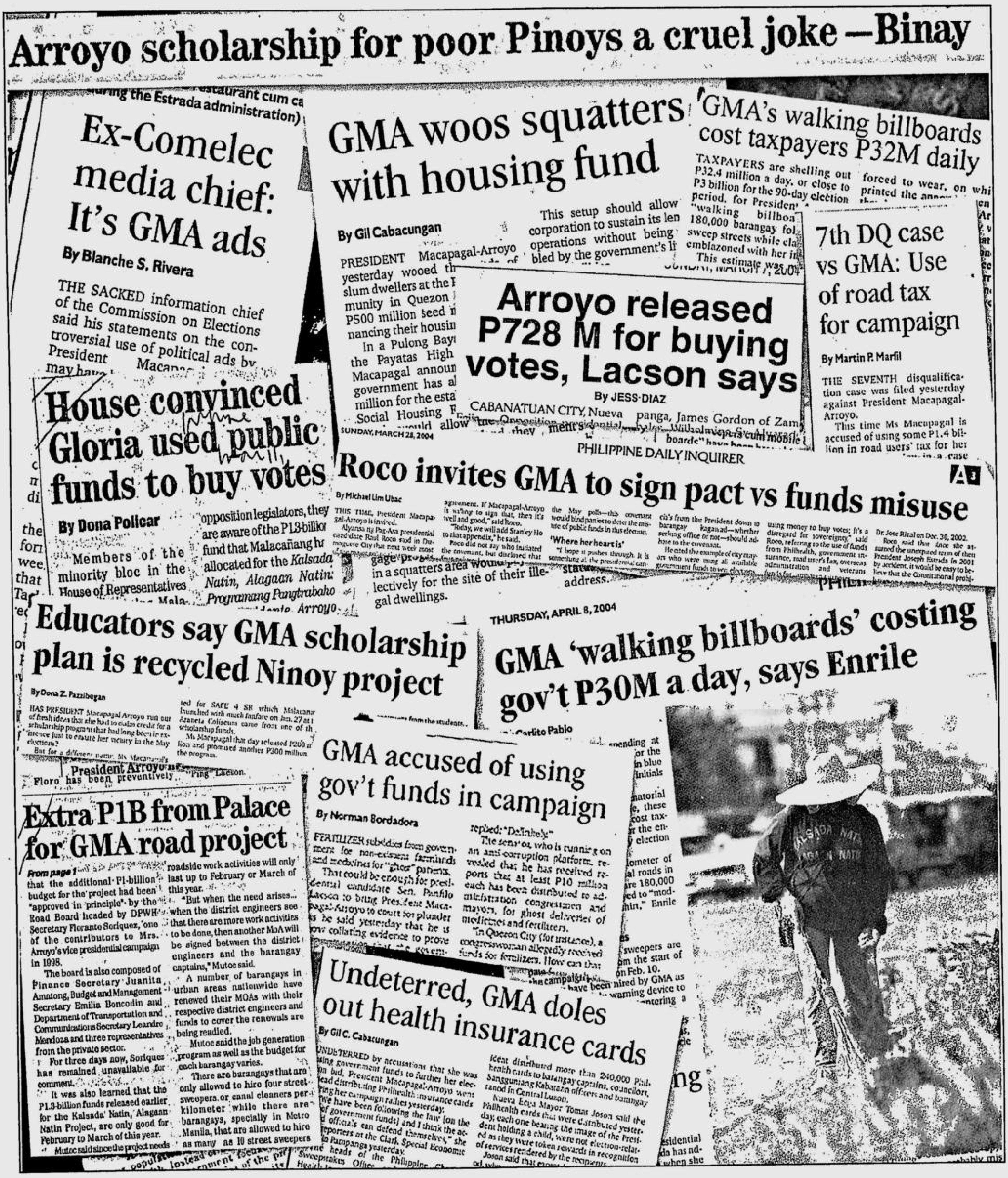
**ABUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS: THE BIGGEST ISSUE OF THE MAY 2004 ELECTIONS**

# THE END DOES NOT JUSTIFY THE MEANS

**The Filipino people are unwitting and unwilling victims to the wanton abuse of public funds for questionable and ill-timed projects and programs being pushed by the Arroyo administration for undue advantage in the May elections.**

## *AND THE HEADLINES SAY IT ALL...*



**Arroyo scholarship for poor Pinoys a cruel joke —Binay**

during the Estrada administration)

**Ex-Comelec media chief: It's GMA ads**

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE SACKED information chief of the Commission on Elections said his statements on the controversial use of political ads by President Macapagal-Arroyo may have

**GMA woos squatters with housing fund**

By Gil Cabacungan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday wooed th slum dwellers at the P munity in Quezon P500 million seed n nancing their housin

In a Pulong Bay the Payatas High Macapagal announ government has al million for the esta Social Housing F would allow the

This setup should allow corporation to sustain its len operations without being bled by the government's li

gage program in a squatters area would p lectively for the site of their illegal dwellings.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2004

**'GMA's walking billboards cost taxpayers P32M daily**

TAXPAYERS are shelling out P32.4 million a day, or close to P3 billion for the 90-day election period, for President "walking billboa 180,000 barangay fol sweep streets while cla emblazoned with her in

This estimate was

forced to wear, on whi printed the anno

SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2004

**Arroyo released P728 M for buying votes, Lacson says**

By JESS DIAZ

CABANATUAN CITY, Nueva Ecija — Opposition presidential

panga, James Gordon of Zam balez, Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado

sweepers cum mobile boards" have been

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

**7th DQ case vs GMA: Use of road tax for campaign**

By Martin P. Marfil

THE SEVENTH disqualification case was filed yesterday against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

This time Ms Macapagal is accused of using some P1.4 billion in road users' tax for her in a case

**House convinced Gloria used public funds to buy votes**

By Dona Policar

Members of the minority bloc in the House of Representatives

opposition legislators, they are aware of the P1.3-billion fund that Malacañang has allocated for the *Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin: Programang Pangtrabaho* Arroyo

**Roco invites GMA to sign pact vs funds misuse**

By Michael Lim Ubac

THIS TIME, President Macapagal-Arroyo is invited.

Alyansa ng Pag-Asa presidential candidate Raul Roco said in Dumaguete City that next week most

agreement. If Macapagal-Arroyo is willing to sign that, then it's well and good," said Roco.

"Today, we will add Stanley Ho to that appendix," he said.

Roco did not say who initiated the covenant, but disclosed that

the May polls—this covenant would bind parties to deter the misuse of public funds in this election.

'Where her heart is'

"I hope it pushes through. It is something at the presidential can

cials from the President down to barangay kagawad—whether seeking office or not—should adhere to the covenant.

He cited the example of city mayors who were using all available government funds to win elections

using money to buy votes; it's a disregard for sovereignty," said Roco, referring to the use of funds from Philhealth, government insurance, road user's tax, overseas administration and veterans funds for

Dr. Jose Rizal on Dec. 30, 2002.

Roco said that since she assumed the unexpired term of then President Joseph Estrada in 2001 by accident, it would be easy to believe that the Constitutional prohi

**Educators say GMA scholarship plan is recycled Ninoy project**

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

HAS PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo run out of fresh ideas that she had to claim credit for a scholarship program that had long been in existence just to ensure her victory in the May elections?

But for a different name, Ms Macapagal's

ted for SAFE 4 SR which Malacañang launched with much fanfare on Jan. 27 at Araneta Coliseum came from one of the scholarship funds.

Ms Macapagal that day released P200 million and promised another P300 million the program.

from the students.

President Arroyo

Floro has been preventively

"Ping" Lacson.

THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2004

**GMA 'walking billboards' costing gov't P30M a day, says Enrile**

Carlito Pablo

spending at for the in blue initials

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sweepers are m the start of on Feb. 10.

have been hired by GMA as warning device to entering a

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ably mis

**Extra P1B from Palace for GMA road project**

*From page 1*

that the additional P1-billion budget for the project had been "approved in principle" by the Road Board headed by DPWH Secretary Florante Soriquez, one of the contributors to Mrs. Arroyo's vice presidential campaign in 1998.

The board is also composed of Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, Budget and Management Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Department of Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza and three representatives from the private sector.

For three days now, Soriquez has remained unavailable for comment.

It was also learned that the P1.3-billion funds released earlier for the Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin Project, are only good for February to March of this year.

Mutoc said since the project needs roadside work activities will only last up to February or March of this year.

"But when the need arises... when the district engineers see that there are more work activities to be done, then another MoA will be signed between the district engineers and the barangay captains," Mutoc said.

A number of barangays in urban areas nationwide have renewed their MOAs with their respective district engineers and funds to cover the renewals are being readied.

Mutoc said the job generation program as well as the budget for each barangay varies.

There are barangays that are only allowed to hire four street sweepers or canal cleaners per kilometer while there are barangays, specially in Metro Manila, that are allowed to hire as many as 10 street sweepers

**GMA accused of using gov't funds in campaign**

By Norman Bordadora

FERTILIZER subsidies from government for non-existent farmlands and medicines for "ghost" patients.

That could be enough for presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson to bring President Macapagal-Arroyo to court for plunder as he said yesterday that he is now collating evidence to prove

replied: "Definitely."

The senator, who is running on an anti-corruption platform, revealed that he has received reports that at least P10 million each has been distributed to administration congressmen and mayors, for ghost deliveries of medicines and fertilizers.

"In Quezon City (for instance), a congresswoman allegedly received funds for fertilizers. How can that

the campaign

**Undeterred, GMA doles out health insurance cards**

By Gil C. Cabacungan

UNDETERRED by accusations that she was using government funds to further her election bid, President Macapagal-Arroyo went ahead distributing Philhealth insurance cards during her campaign rallies yesterday.

"We have been following the law [on the use of government funds] and I think the ad officials can defend themselves," she told reporters at the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga yesterday.

heads of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office

ident distributed more than 240,000 Philhealth cards to barangay captains, councilors, Sangguniang Kabataan officers and barangay tanods in Central Luzon.

Nueva Ecija Mayor Tomas Joson said the Philhealth cards that were distributed yesterday, each one bearing the image of the President holding a child, were not election-related as they were token rewards in recognition of services rendered by the recipients.

Joson said that

**There is no justification for the diversion, misuse and abuse of billions of pesos in scarce public funds for obviously politically-motivated projects and programs. The Filipino people are not dumb. Nor are they deaf, blind or insensitive to the unconscionable raid on the national treasury in aid of election.**

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# Fil-Estate to pay debt by Q3, eyes new projects

**By Elizabeth L. Sanchez**

PROPERTY developer Fil-Estate Land Inc. expects to wipe out its debt by the third quarter of the year.

FELI chief finance officer Roberto Roco said during the company's recent stockholders meeting that the firm pared down its debt to P279 million as of the end of last year, down from P633 million at the end of its fiscal year in September.

Roco told stockholders that FELI used some of its assets to trim its debt level.

He said the company would only secure fresh debt to bankroll marketable residential projects for the affordable and middle-income markets.

Among the residential projects slated for launch this year are the Tierra Vista in Lipa, Richgate in Baguio, Festival Villas in Iloilo, Sunflower and Phase IV of Canyon Woods in Lipa and the Pililia Farm Estate in Rizal.

It also plans to put up a commercial center in its Ecocentrum project in Laguna.

Roco also said the company planned to launch a residential leisure project by November called the Nasugbu Harbor Town in Batangas, its biggest for the year.

Phase I of the project, expected to cost P300 milliion, consists of residential lots, a sports club, a dive hole and Marina facilities.

# S&P affirms URC rating

LONDON—Standard & Poor's Ratings Services recently affirmed its "BB" corporate credit rating on Philippine food company, Universal Robina Corp. (URC). The outlook is stable.

The rating reflects URC's established market position in the Philippines, and its low-cost structure that supports satisfactory operating margins.

The strengths are, however, partly offset by weaknesses such as URC's high capital outlay and execution risks in connection with its international growth strategy, and earnings exposure to volatile raw material costs and supply and foreign exchange movements.

The close linkage between URC's financial policy with that of its parent, JG Summit Holdings Inc., is another factor that constrains the rating.

"The stable outlook is based on URC's strong competitive position and low-cost operations, and reflects the expectation that the company will not be required to provide financing or other type of support to related parties," said Standard & Poor's credit analyst Ee-Lin Tan of the Corporate and Infrastructure Ratings Group.

URC is one of the largest food companies in the Philippines, with a wide range of consumer food products contributing to most of its revenue.

In recent years, URC has established operations in several Asian markets, including Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

URC is 86 percent owned by JG Summit, one of the largest business conglomerates in the Philippines.

URC's diversified portfolio of products and strong brands mitigates the effect of intense competition in the domestic branded consumer food industry.

Its wide distribution network also covers diverse regions of the Philippines and contributes substantially to its ability to dominate the market. *Reuters*

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# MWSS renews call for serious water conservation

**A**NGAT DAM'S water level reached its critical level of 180 meters on April 13, 2004. At this level, there is no more water release for electricity generation and irrigation as it is already technically inadvisable to do so. However, water for the domestic use of Metro Manila residents continues to be provided, with only five-percent reduction.

Administrator Orlando C. Hondrade of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System assures the public that there is no water crisis yet. "What we experience at present is a water shortage," Hondrade said. "Concerned agencies such as the Office of the President, the DENR, NWRB, NIA, NPC, Maynilad, Manila Water and MWSS have been undertaking measures since the last quarter of 2003 to prevent the occurrence of a water crisis," he added.

Ninety seven percent of water for Metro Manila's domestic use comes from Angat Dam in Bulacan, which is conveyed through aqueducts to the La Mesa and Balara filtration plants for treatment. The rest comes from deep wells and other sources.

The water level of Angat Dam has gone down substantially because the rainfall during the last quarter of 2003 was very scarce and accordingly, the inflow of water to Angat was much less than normal. For instance, inflow to Angat in October was only 30 percent of the normal. In November, it was 89 percent and in December, only 50 percent of the normal. The dry season, with much lesser frequency of rains, started in January and will last until May.

## Measures to prevent the occurrence of a water crisis or to lessen the adverse impact of the water shortage

*Water use reduction*

**IN JANUARY**, the National Water Resources Board reduced Angat's water release for the domestic use of Metro Manila and for irrigation by 5 percent. In February, release for irrigation was further reduced by 10 percent and in April, by 50 percent and so on.

In order to minimize the adverse effect of such water reduction for irrigation on the palay crops, the reduction has been timed with the decreasing requirement for irrigation water. To date, more than 80 percent of the palay crops has either been harvested or already reached its terminal irrigation stage. Earlier on, NIA adopted irrigation rotation and much better water management. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has, likewise, ordered the release of P50 million for the installation of deep and shallow wells for irrigation in the affected areas. She also directed government agencies to exert greater effort in assisting the farmers.

*Water conservation*

Since January, MWSS and DENR, together with Maynilad and Manila Water, have been conducting massive multi-media campaign on water conservation. Even the different broadcasting corporations and various civic organizations, on their own initiative, have launched similar campaigns.

*Cloud Seeding*

During the first quarter of 2003, the MWSS, NIA and NPC conducted cloud seeding operations in order to increase the flow of water into Angat and Ipo dams. These were undertaken for 45 days, with good results.

*Immediate repair of leaks and strict enforcement of laws on illegal water tapping*

Maynilad and Manila Water have been more vigilant in looking for, and immediately repairing, water leaks along their distribution lines. The public has been enjoined to immediately report these leaks and illegal water tapping, which waste considerable volume of water.

*Maximize use of deep wells and other sources*

Installation of deep and shallow wells has been intensified. Various proposals to augment water supply, such as the desalination of sea water and recycling have been seriously considered.

*Patubig ni Pangulong GMA Program*

To ensure that the urban poor and those living in waterless areas are provided clean and sufficient water even in the midst a water shortage situation, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the deployment of static and mobile water tankers, installation of public faucets and construction of deepwells in these areas. She likewise asked Maynilad and Manilad Water to speed up their connection of these areas with their water distribution lines. To date, more than 670,000 households in Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite are now benefiting from this Program.

## Long-term Water Supply Program

**IN ORDER** to ensure the long-term adequacy of water supply for Metro Manila and to lessen dependence on Angat, MWSS has been developing alternative water sources like the following: Wawa Dam Project which is expected to generate 50 MLD; the Bulk Water Supply Project (400 MLD); the Laiban Dam Project (1,900 MLD); and the Agos Dam Project (3,000 MLD).

Since Administrator Hondrade took over the rein of MWSS, he has poured in substantial amount of time, attention and resources to speed up the process of getting these projects off the ground.

To date, NEDA's approval of most of these projects and ADB's approval of the loans for feasibility studies and project designs have been obtained. Procurement of the services of consultants who will undertake the studies and designs is already in process. Bidding for the 400 MLD Bulk Water Supply Project will be undertaken this year.

# WATER SAVING TIPS

## RECYCLE AND REUSE WATER

**IN THE BATHROOM**

- Turn off the water while shaving, brushing your teeth, etc. Use a glass to gargle.
- Use only short bursts of water from the tap to rinse your toothbrush or razor
- Take shorter showers or use a pail and a tabo instead of the shower.
- Turn off the water when soaping and shampooing.
- Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket.
- Fix leaky faucets and toilets.

**LAUNDRY**

*When washing by washing machine.*

- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Don't use more water or soap than what is actually needed.
- Avoid double washing by pre-soaking clothes. Use the pre-soak setting on the washer or start the wash cycle to partially fill the tub, turn the washer off and allow clothes to soak, then turn the wash cycle on without draining the tub.

*When washing by hand*

- Soak heavily soiled clothes first to remove dirt easily.
- Don't let the basin overflow under a running tap.

**IN THE KITCHEN**

- When cleaning vegetables soak them first in a basin of water rather than rinsing them under a running faucet.
- Soak pots, pans, and dishes immediately after they are used to reduce the water needed to clean them.
- Soak greasy plates first in hot water. Wash slightly greased utensils first before the greasier ones.
- Do not thaw frozen food under a running tap.

**IN THE GARDEN**

- Water your plants, garden during the cool part of the day.
- Capture and store rainwater for watering the garden.

**IN THE GARAGE**

- When washing your car, use a pail, not a water hose, and a cotton rag instead of a sponge.
- Sweep the driveway instead of washing with a hose

## Make every drop count!

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# Benpres cuts its losses by 52% in '03

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BENPRES Holdings Corp., the flagship company of the Lopez family, had cut its net losses by 52 percent last year to P1.9 billion from P4 billion the previous year, the company said in its financial report to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Benpres said its revenues, including that of subsidiaries, was lower by more than 8 percent to P5.2 billion last year from restated revenues worth P5.7 billion the previous year.

The restatement of 2002 revenue resulted from the company's adoption of new accounting standards and the effect of a refund by Manila Electric Co. to First Philippine Holdings Corp.

One of its subsidiaries, television network ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., reported that its consolidated airtime and broadcasting revenue grew 12 percent to P11.06 billion from P9.9 billion. Consolidated costs and operating expenses increased 12 percent to P10.4 billion from P9.3 billion. As a result, net income before discontinuing operations went up 131 percent to P1.01 billion last year from P438 million in 2002.

Power plant investing company First Philippine Holdings, on the other hand, reported net earnings at P3.8 billion, reversing its P3-billion restated loss in 2002. Its share in net earnings of associates ballooned 148% to P617 million in 2003 from the P1.3-billion loss in 2002.

Share in extraordinary loss of an associate sunk by P4.5 billion. FPHC's share in net earnings of associates in 2002 was affected negatively by the Supreme Court's decision ordering Meralco to refund its customers.

Meralco restated its 2002 financial statements to recognize the loss from the refund. This also brought about the restatement of First Philippine Holdings' 2002 financial statements, reflecting the FPHC Group's P4.5-billion extraordinary loss arising from the refund. Last year, the FPHC Group also sold 60.29 percent of its shares in Panay Power Corp.

As for its water concession, Maynilad Water Services Inc. filed a petition with a Quezon City regional trial court last November to enter into corporate rehabilitation. Maynilad sought court protection to be able to settle its contractual obligations "in due time, sustain the gains of privatization, and protect the public interest."

Last year, creditors of Sky Vision Corp., Central CATV Inc., and Philippine Home Cable Holdings Inc. agreed to restructure the cable operators' debt obligations and consented to the proposed consolidation of the ownership of the Benpres and PLDT groups in these entities. The agreement will be the basis for a subsequent debt restructuring agreement expected to be completed within the year.

Total outstanding principal debt of the three firms stands at P2.5 billion.

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 15, 2004)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES | | | | | |
| BANKS | | | | | |
| Banco de Oro Univ. Bank | 16.5 | 17 | 16.5 | 17 | 29,000 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 44.5 | 44.5 | 44.5 | 44.5 | 160,300 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 39.5 | 40 | 39.5 | 40 | 331,200 |
| Export and Ind. Bank Inc. | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 210,000 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 23.75 | 24 | 23.75 | 23.75 | 22,000 |
| Philippine National Bank | 23 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 21,100 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 26.5 | 5,000 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 1,500 |
| FINANCIAL SERVICES | | | | | |
| First Metro Invest. Corp. | 180 | 190 | 180 | 190 | 160 |
| Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc. | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 92,000 |
| Sun Life Financial Inc. | 1490 | 1490 | 1490 | 1490 | 110 |
| COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL | | | | | |
| COMMUNICATION | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 21.5 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 1,900 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.66 | 0.67 | 0.66 | 0.67 | 160,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 860 | 860 | 855 | 855 | 5,000 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 1,000,000 |
| Pilipino Tel. Corp. | 1.7 | 1.72 | 1.7 | 1.72 | 2,121,000 |
| Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 20,000 |
| Transpacific Broadcast | 1.36 | 1.36 | 1.34 | 1.34 | 60,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 1040 | 1045 | 1040 | 1045 | 111,430 |
| POWER & ENERGY | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 18.25 | 18.25 | 18.25 | 18.25 | 14,800 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 27 | 27 | 26.5 | 27 | 91,000 |
| Petron Corp. | 2.95 | 2.95 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3,299,000 |
| TRANSPORTATION SERVICES | | | | | |
| Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp. | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1,000 |
| CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS | | | | | |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 360,000 |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1.62 | 1,000 |
| Union Cement Corp. | 1.76 | 1.76 | 1.74 | 1.74 | 3,515,000 |
| FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO | | | | | |
| Alaska Milk Corp. | 3 | 3.05 | 3 | 3.05 | 101,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 288,200 |
| RFM Corp. | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.59 | 0.59 | 160,000 |
| Swift Food Inc. | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 100,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 56.5 | 57 | 56.5 | 57 | 72,700 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 13,400 |
| Universal Robina Corp. | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 3,182,000 |
| Vitarich Corp. | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 450,000 |
| HOLDING FIRMS | | | | | |
| Ayala Corp. | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 862,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 48,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 60,000 |
| Balabac Resources & Hldgs | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 40,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 0.52 | 0.52 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 1,970,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 1,450,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 22.25 | 22.25 | 21.75 | 22 | 144,700 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.06 | 0.065 | 0.06 | 0.065 | 900,000 |
| Medco Holdings | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 200,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 700,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 3,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 200,000 |
| MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING | | | | | |
| CEN Azucar De Tarlac | 3.45 | 3.45 | 3.45 | 3.45 | 5,000 |
| Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.14 | 1.14 | 310,000 |
| HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | 0.48 | 0.5 | 0.48 | 0.5 | 130,000 |
| BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) | 21.75 | 21.75 | 21.75 | 21.75 | 36,000 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series P | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 300 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series T | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 2,300 |
| PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 2,800 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series V | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 1,500 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 1,700 |
| OTHERS | | | | | |
| Centro Escolar University | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 1,000 |
| PROPERTY | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 5.5 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 1,007,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 1,000,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1,246,000 |
| Kuok Phil. Properties | 0.185 | 0.185 | 0.16 | 0.16 | 510,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land Inc. | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 190,000 |
| Philippine Estates Corp. | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 20,000,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 5.7 | 5.8 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 32,310,000 |
| MINING | | | | | |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 20,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B | 0.25 | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.26 | 1,260,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. A | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 2,000,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.0028 | 0.003 | 0.0028 | 0.003 | 10,000,000 |
| OIL | | | | | |
| Imperial Res. | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.009 | 15,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 19,000,000 |
| Sinophil Corp. | 0.025 | 0.028 | 0.025 | 0.028 | 400,000 |

| | SHARES | VALUE(P) |
|---|---|---|
| Bank & Fin Svc | 872,370 | 22,322,190 00 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 22,196,730 | 186,284,950 00 |
| PRO | 56,263,000 | 192,841,770 00 |
| Mining | 13,280,000 | 370,600 00 |
| OIL | 34,400,000 | 202,500.00 |
| GRAND TOTALS : | 127,012,100 | 402,022,010.00 |
| | AVERAGES | |
| Bank & Fin Svc | 423 32 | UNCH 0.00 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 2,334.37 | UP 0.09 |
| PRO | 522.77 | DOWN 0 07 |
| Mining | 1,431.35 | DOWN 26 05 |
| OIL | 1.14 | UP 0.03 |
| SME | 100.00 | UNCH 0.00 |
| All Shares Index | 965 06 | DOWN 6.14 |
| Composite | 1,483.20 | DOWN 0.23 |

NO. OF ADVANCES: 12; NO. OF DECLINES: 15; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 43; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 70; NO. OF TRADES: 783

## DISCLOSURES

**A. Soriano Corp.**'s 200,000 shares were bought by its fully-owned subsidiary Anscor Consolidated Corp.

***

**PRUDENTIAL Bank** declared the stock dividend in the amount of 20.98%.

***

**UEM Development Phils. Inc.** disclosed the resignation of Napoleon J. Poblador as corporate secretary and Joseph P. San Pedro as assistant corporate secretary. Also, the board appointed Sherrylou O. Khosiking in place of Poblador.

***

**AMERICAN Standard Group**, through its wholly owned subsidiary, American Standard Inc. offered to purchase additional equity in Sanity Wares Manufacturing Corp.

***

**PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange Inc.** disclosed the buy-back of 8 qualifying shares issued to non-broker directors, and the appointment of committee chair and members.

***

**PRIMEX Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 21, 3 p.m. at the Marikina function room of the Valle Verde Country Club, Capt. Henry Javier St., Bo. Oranbo, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of April 23 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

***

**JARDINE Davies Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 2 p.m. at the Buendia Room, 3/F, Mondragon House, 324 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City. Stockholders of record as of April 27 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Erika Joyce Sarmiento, PDI Research***

## CURRENCIES

| April 15, 2004<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.835213 | 1.000000 | 55.7450 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.007692 | 0.009210 | 0.5134 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.495615 | 1.790700 | 99.8226 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.107121 | 0.128256 | 7.1496 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.643957 | 0.771010 | 42.9800 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.621670 | 0.744325 | 41.4924 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.497032 | 0.595096 | 33.1736 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.612146 | 0.732923 | 40.8568 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 2.215476 | 2.652590 | 147.8686 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.222729 | 0.266674 | 14.8657 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.495558 | 0.593331 | 33.0752 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000097 | 0.000116 | 0.0065 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.021188 | 0.025368 | 1.4141 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.227398 | 0.272264 | 15.1774 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.197300 | 66.7435 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.296701 | 0.355240 | 19.8029 |
| Brazil | Real | 0.288801 | 0.345781 | 19.2756 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134279 | 0.160772 | 8.9622 |
| India | Rupee | 0.019135 | 0.022910 | 1.2771 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.219822 | 0.263193 | 14.6717 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.073932 | 0.088519 | 4.9345 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.529453 | 0.633914 | 35.3375 |
| Norway | Kroner | 0.120537 | 0.144319 | 8.0451 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 0.014615 | 0.017498 | 0.9754 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.126785 | 0.151800 | 8.4621 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000722 | 0.000864 | 0.0482 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.108776 | 0.130237 | 7.2601 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.018905 | 0.022635 | 1.2618 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.025487 | 0.030516 | 1.7011 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 0.000436 | 0.000522 | 0.0291 |

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# New pharmacoeconomic felodipine brand for BP treatment

A NEW brand of felodipine, a popularly prescribed antihypertensive drug, will soon be out in the market that is expected to address the problem of patient compliance because of its pharmacoeconomic or affordable cost. This will likely help sustain blood-pressure or BP control and prevent complications such as stroke and heart attack.

People suffering from chronic diseases such as hypertension generally deal with a whole gamut of medical examinations and drug treatments to prolong life and hopefully, retard the progress of the disease.

However, problems arise when patients choose to forego their medical treatments and fail to follow the instructions of their physicians and other health care professionals. If patients are not compliant with their treatment, regardless of the stage of the disease or the complexity of the treatment, they are putting themselves at risk for greater emotional, mental, and physical complications.

Failure to sustain medical treatment is caused by numerous factors like financial, psychological and emotional. Non-compliance with treatment may be due to denial of being sick, not an act of defiance. Sometimes, the responsibility of keeping up with daily doses is enough to confuse the mind of a patient who has other worries.

Among the common causes of non-compliance is the costly medicine, which may result in the cessation of treatment. Involuntary compliance is the unfortunate result when the patient has financial troubles, most especially when the treatment is long-term or lifetime.

A survey conducted by Isis Research reveals that 18 percent of patients who cannot afford medicine borrow money from their relatives. This practice, however, is a short-term solution for a long-term problem. Others opt for more affordable but ineffective alternatives, switching to other remedies such as herbal medicines. Worst, the survey revealed that 13 percent would just stop taking their medication.

Effective and affordable medicines-particularly reasonably priced medicines reflecting corporate social responsibility of its distributor- is seen as an answer to the problem of treatment non-compliance. If the patient has the option to buy an affordable, yet effective medicine, it is most likely that he would be able to sustain the treatment regimen recommended by his doctor.

With this scenario, there is a clamor for pharmaceutical companies to lower their prices to enable patients to continue with their treatment religiously.

An affordable brand of felodipine, which belongs to the calcium channel blocker class of drugs and is one of the most prescribed antihypertensive drugs, will soon be launched in the country.

Several landmark clinical studies, such as the Hypertension Optimal Treatment (HOT) study done by Hansson et al., have shown that a felodipine-based treatment regimen helps achieve optimal blood pressure target levels, which translate into a lower incidence of cardiovascular complications such as heart attacks and strokes.

Hypertension remains to be the most prevalent risk factor of cardiovascular diseases in the country. It is estimated that 20 percent of the country's adult population is hypertensive. The introduction of a pharmacoeconomic felodipine will help physicians and hypertensive patients have treatment sustainability within reach.

Patients are reminded that felodipine is a prescription drug and should only be bought upon the doctor's advice.

# Sotheby's jewelry, watches auction talk set

SOTHEBY'S Philippine representative Kim Camacho offers a lecture suitable for both connoisseurs and collectors who appreciate the beauty and rarity of these magnificent items on April 15, 19 and 20. She will present the highlights of the forthcoming Spring jewelry and watches auctions in New York, Hong Kong and Geneva.

Camacho will talk on how you can purchase at auction. You don't have to go to the auction center to bid. You can bid from the Philippines, or anywhere else in the world and she will inform you about what you must do before you bid, how you can bid, and what happens after you win the bid.

Sotheby's makes it remarkably easy for clients to receive their purchases after they win a bid. Camacho will also explain why a condition report is important, and she will discuss the role of the Sotheby's specialist.

This is one of a series of talks organized by Sotheby's in the Philippines to provide the public and clients with more information on international auctions.

There is a beautiful array of sparkling diamonds, gemstones and quality jadeite jewels at the Auction of Magnificent Jewels and Jadeite in Hong Kong on April 26. Limited edition timepieces are among the highly sought-after items at the Auction of Important Watches on April 27. The jewels and watches will be on preview from April 23 to 25. This is open to the public. The venue for both auctions and preview is the Island Shangri-La Hong Kong on 88 Queensway.

Call Camille Abello of Sotheby's at 884-8241, or fax 884-8242 for details and reservations as only limited seats are available.

# *'Fashion Expose' reset*

THE PRODUCERS of "Fashion Expose (the hot summer collection)" wishes to announce that the fashion show has been moved to Saturday, May 8 at the International Hall of CSB Hotel at the Angelo King International Conference Center located at Arellano corner Estrada Streets, Manila.

"Fashion Expose" will unveil back-to-back collections of haute couture designers Lito Perez of Camp Suki and Millet Guinto of Design Avenue. Lito Perez was president of the Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines and is currently an active board member. Millet Guinto, on the other hand, is the proprietor and house designer of Design Avenue. Their range of styles is from avant-garde to simple yet dramatic ensembles with a twist. History is their inspiration. For the show, Lito and Millet will design and show various twists in the look of the summer, beach and swim wear. Different textures and treatments will be experienced to create a Pinoy look transcending fashion, art and time.

For the show, Lito will unveil his 50-piece collection while Millet will present her 30-piece collection at 7 p.m. after the cocktails at 6 p.m. Tickets are available at P250 at CSB Hotel sales and marketing department at 400-5455.

## Bits & Clips

### Badon at Café Lupe

THE MUCH-sought after Prince of Operatic Pop, Jonathan Badon, otherwise known as the Josh Groban of the Philippines, will be featured for four consecutive Fridays-April 16, 23, 30, and May 7 at the Edsa Guadalupe Café Lupe, owned by successful entrepreneur Alvin Carranza. The concert will feature pop, classical, Broadway, well-loved Filipino tunes, and beautiful Josh Groban pieces. This is a most-requested venue comeback for the very talented Badon who had a jampacked crowd in his Valentine Concert two months ago at Café Lupe. Jonathan is a UP Conservatory of Music graduate major in Voice and a CCP scholar who has to his credit concerts and musicals here and abroad. Visit Café Lupe this Friday. For inquiries, call Paz Reyes at 896-3166.

### MediMedia's health fair

THE HOT summer months are fast approaching, and what better way to cool off than to join the season's most exciting summer affair. HealthToday, HealthGuide and Moms&babies will celebrate "A Healthy Summer, a Radiant You!" right at the heart of Ayala Town Center in Alabang, Muntinlupa from April 16 to 18. A glimpse of what awaits the public include medical services ranging from bone scanning, BMI, blood pressure monitoring and free consultation, hand and foot massage and facial services at discounted rates, total makeover, free health and fitness seminars, healthy food sampling, and attractive discounts on health magazines and books. MediMedia Asia will also offer a wide Interested? Get in touch with Ghina or Fides at 886-0333 local 113 or 115.

## *Product*FILES

### SUV eyes

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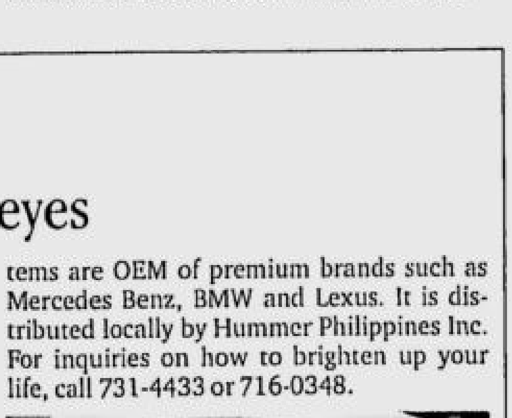
The beam of light produced by an HiD Xenon lighting system is three times greater than a standard halogen bulb with less power consumption (35 watts). Xenon's bright white beam offers greater nighttime visibility, road safety, and longer service life (3000 hours). Shown is a Toyota Land Cruiser VX equipped with Xenon's HiD system. HiD systems are OEM of premium brands such as Mercedes Benz, BMW and Lexus. It is distributed locally by Hummer Philippines Inc. For inquiries on how to brighten up your life, call 731-4433 or 716-0348.



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Assess your competitors' relative strengths and weaknesses to carve out competitive space
Develop a successful strategic marketing plan

What Will You Cover
What you need to know about competitive advantage
Strategies for market leaders, challengers and niche players
Benchmarking your company against competitors
Internal and external analyses to identify competitive opportunities
Conducting competitive research and intelligence
Creating a competitive marketing plan
Why some strategies fail—and what to do about it

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

For further information, please call Kristine Santayana at telephone numbers 8451324 or 7596680 or e-mail at ksantayana@eccp.com

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Per DTI-NCR Permit NO. 3355, Series of 2003

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# New pharmacoeconomic felodipine brand for BP treatment

A NEW brand of felodipine, a popularly prescribed antihypertensive drug, will soon be out in the market that is expected to address the problem of patient compliance because of its pharmacoeconomic or affordable cost. This will likely help sustain blood-pressure or BP control and prevent complications such as stroke and heart attack.

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With this scenario, there is a clamor for pharmaceutical companies to lower their prices to enable patients to continue with their treatment religiously.

An affordable brand of felodipine, which belongs to the calcium channel blocker class of drugs and is one of the most prescribed antihypertensive drugs, will soon be launched in the country.

Several landmark clinical studies, such as the Hypertension Optimal Treatment (HOT) study done by Hansson et al., have shown that a felodipine-based treatment regimen helps achieve optimal blood pressure target levels, which translate into a lower incidence of cardiovascular complications such as heart attacks and strokes.

Hypertension remains to be the most prevalent risk factor of cardiovascular diseases in the country. It is estimated that 20 percent of the country's adult population is hypertensive. The introduction of a pharmacoeconomic felodipine will help physicians and hypertensive patients have treatment sustainability within reach.

Patients are reminded that felodipine is a prescription drug and should only be bought upon the doctor's advice.

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# Sotheby's jewelry, watches auction talk set

SOTHEBY'S Philippine representative Kim Camacho offers a lecture suitable for both connoisseurs and collectors who appreciate the beauty and rarity of these magnificent items on April 15, 19 and 20. She will present the highlights of the forthcoming Spring jewelry and watches auctions in New York, Hong Kong and Geneva.

Camacho will talk on how ,you can purchase at auction. You don't have to go to the auction center to bid. You can bid from the Philippines, or anywhere else in the world and she will inform you about what you must do before you bid, how you can bid, and what happens after you win the bid.

Sotheby's makes it remarkably easy for clients to receive their purchases after they win a bid. Camacho will also explain why a condition report is important, and she will discuss the role of the Sotheby's specialist.

This is one of a series of talks organized by Sotheby's in the Philippines to provide the public and clients with more information on international auctions.

There is a beautiful array of sparkling diamonds, gemstones and quality jadeite jewels at the Auction of Magnificent Jewels and Jadeite in Hong Kong on April 26. Limited edition timepieces are among the highly sought-after items at the Auction of Important Watches on April 27. The jewels and watches will be on preview from April 23 to 25. This is open to the public. The venue for both auctions and preview is the Island Shangri-La Hong Kong on 88 Queensway.

Call Camille Abello of Sotheby's at 884-8241, or fax 884-8242 for details and reservations as only limited seats are available.

# 'Fashion Expose' reset

THE PRODUCERS of "Fashion Expose (the hot summer collection)" wishes to announce that the fashion show has been moved to Saturday, May 8 at the International Hall of CSB Hotel at the Angelo King International Conference Center located at Arellano corner Estrada Streets, Manila.

"Fashion Expose" will unveil back-to-back collections of haute couture designers Lito Perez of Camp Suki and Millet Guinto of Design Avenue. Lito Perez was president of the Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines and is currently an active board member. Millet Guinto, on the other hand, is the proprietor and house designer of Design Avenue. Their range of styles is from avant-garde to simple yet dramatic ensembles with a twist. History is their inspiration. For the show, Lito and Millet will design and show various twists in the look of the summer, beach and swim wear. Different textures and treatments will be experienced to create a Pinoy look transcending fashion, art and time.

For the show, Lito will unveil his 50-piece collection while Millet will present her 30-piece collection at 7 p.m. after the cocktails at 6 p.m. Tickets are available at P250 at CSB Hotel sales and marketing department at 400-5455.

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## Bits Clips

### Badon at Café Lupe

THE MUCH-sought after Prince of Operatic Pop, Jonathan Badon, otherwise known as the Josh Groban of the Philippines, will be featured for four consecutive Fridays-April 16, 23, 30, and May 7 at the Edsa Guadalupe Café Lupe, owned by successful entrepreneur Alvin Carranza. The concert will feature pop, classical, Broadway, well-loved Filipino tunes, and beautiful Josh Groban pieces. This is a most-requested venue comeback for the very talented Badon who had a jampacked crowd in his Valentine Concert two months ago at Café Lupe. Jonathan is a UP Conservatory of Music graduate major in Voice and a CCP scholar who has to his credit concerts and musicals here and abroad. Visit Café Lupe this Friday. For inquiries, call Paz Reyes at 896-3166.

### MediMedia's health fair

THE HOT summer months are fast approaching, and what better way to cool off than to join the season's most exciting summer affair. HealthToday, HealthGuide and Moms&babies will celebrate "A Healthy Summer, a Radiant You!" right at the heart of Ayala Town Center in Alabang, Muntinlupa from April 16 to 18. A glimpse of what awaits the public include medical services ranging from bone scanning, BMI, blood pressure monitoring and free consultation, hand and foot massage and facial services at discounted rates, total makeover, free health and fitness seminars, healthy food sampling, and attractive discounts on health magazines and books. MediMedia Asia will also offer a wide Interested? Get in touch with Ghina or Fides at 886-0333 local 113 or 115.

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# Nuke plant conversion too costly, study shows

**By Abigail L. Ho**

CONVERTING the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) into a facility using another type of fuel could cost more than $600 million—enough to put up an entirely new plant, according to an industry executive.

Lee Gil Gu, president and chief executive of Kepco Philippines Corp., said during a news briefing yesterday that earlier plans to convert the nuclear power facility into a gas-fired power plant would be too costly to be economically viable.

An in-house study that Kepco did several years back, Lee said, showed that the cost of converting BNPP into a gas-fired plant could finance the building of a new plant.

He said rehabilitating the nuclear power facility would be a better option rather than converting it into something else.

"Our estimate from several years ago (on how much it would take to convert the plant) is around $600 million," Gu said. "But considering the escalation of, costs, this will be even higher now."

The Philippine National Oil Co. is looking for an entity willing enough to rehabilitate the idle 620-megawatt BNPP.

While the burden of finding alternative uses for the plant and ultimately easing the country's debt burden now falls on the Department of Finance, the PNOC is still doing its part in helping the government, said Thelmo Cunanan, PNOC president and chief executive.

We've been searching for an entity to rehabilitate (the nuclear plant), to ease our debt burden," Cunanan said. "We're paying around $155,000 a day for it."

Toronto-based think tank Probe International pegged the debt burden from the unused power plant at an even higher $170,000 per day.

Debt payments for the idle plant would last until 2018, further increasing the country's already ballooning budget deficit.

# A miracle technology for rice

**By Ernesto M. Ordonez**

COMMENTARY

ON MARCH 19, two former activists met at the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement office in Quezon City. One was Norman Uphoff, who used to be the Student Council president of the biggest university in the United States then—the University of Minnesota. He majored in Political Science. The other was Roberto Versola, who used to be associate editor of the Philippine Collegian at the University of the Philippines. He majored in Engineering.

They share a common interest in a field different from their undergraduate majors: agriculture. This was because they had discovered a miracle technology for rice that would help millions of poor people, which was their original passion when they were still activists. It is in agriculture and in this technology that their passion is now finding fruition.

## Less agrochemicals

This miracle technology is called the System of Rice Intensification (SRI). With only three hours of training and even less money for inputs, the yields that result are simply amazing. Uphoff showed increased yield data from those who used SRI in several countries. In the Philippines, the average yield increased from 3 to 6 tons per hectare; Bangladesh, 4.9 to 6.3; Cambodia, 2.7 to 4.8; Indonesia, 5.0 to 7.4; and Sri Lanka, 2.5 to 5.3.

In our country, Noe Ysulat of the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Training Institute in Kabakan, Cotabato, used SRI on a seed variety that had previously yielded 3.6 tons per hectare. After his first SRI trial, this increased to 7.6 tons. Becoming more adept with the technology, his second trial resulted in 11.6 tons.

At the time of the second trial, Ysulat got two other rice varieties which were yielding 3 to 4 tons a hectare. When he applied SRI, one variety resulted in an increased yield of 12.5 tons while the other yielded 12 tons. The net incomes per hectare for the three varieties after using SRI were P68,422, P74,850, and P71,490. The resulting Return on Investment (ROI) rates were 280 percent, 298 percent, and 292 percent, respectively.

This is far better than the former net incomes of less than P15,000 per hectare for the three varieties before SRI was applied.

The good news is that SRI increases the yields of all varieties of seeds, whether it be the non-certified traditional, the certified inbred, or the hybrid seeds. Furthermore, there is a significant decrease in input costs, since there is less use of agrochemicals and inorganic fertilizers. Finally, this not only stops the degradation of the soil but actually rejuvenates it with organic fertilizer, which allows for sustainable development.

Versola points out three main differences between the SRI technology and the traditional practice.

## Differences

The first difference is that farmers assume it is better to transplant seedlings when they are 21 to 30 days old because they are stronger then. "However," Versola said, "the seedlings would have lost much of their growth potential. They should instead be transplanted when they are only eight to 12 days old."

The second difference is that farmers believe that the more seedlings planted, the greater the yield. So they plant the seedlings close to each other with three to five seedlings per hill. But since these seedlings will compete for the limited nutrients in the soil, a low yield will result. Thus, SRI recommends wide spacing of at least 25x25 cm with only one seedling per hill.

The third belief is that the more the water, the better. Thus, the rice crop undergoes continuous flooding. "But rice is not an aquatic plant," Versola said. "With continuous flooding, most of the rice plant's roots degenerate by the start of the reproductive phase." Thus, SRI recommends that the soil instead be well drained during the vegetative growth period. This way, the soil will be aerated, which is good for the plant's root growth and health.

But because SRI recommends practices that are inconsistent with currently held, but wrong, beliefs, it is not widely applied today. According to Antonio Balagot, president of the Philippine Association of Provincial and City Agriculturists (PAPCA), he has seen steady improvements in income among farmers who implemented SRI. "It is easy to teach, costs even less to implement, and is consistently successful," he said. "Yet so few know about it because it has not been promoted enough by government agencies."

## Prime technology

Hopefully, this will now change. Upon the recommendation of Alyansa Agrikultura members, Balagot will take the initiative in pushing SRI as a prime technology by making this a main agenda item in the next PACPA Board meeting on April 27. Versola will be there, supported by data from his SRI colleague Uphoff, to actualize their passion to help the poor.

For those who share this passion and want to know more about this miracle technology, please text or call Versola at 0919-6087073.

*(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former undersecretary of Agriculture and Trade and Industry, and former chair and Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@Yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)*

# Quedancor gets ₱5B in fresh loans

**By Christine A. Gaylican**

EQUITABLE-PCI Bank and the Land Bank of the Philippines has approved some P5 billion in new loans for agriculture and microfinance lender Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor).

The banks would either buy or invest in commercial papers which Quedancor would issue.

"These loans would allow more credit to flow to the agriculture sector even in the medium term," said Nelson Buenaflor, Quedancor president.

During an interview yesterday, Buenaflor said that only P2.5 billion will be used for Quedancor's re-lending purposes. He added that the rest will be invested in zero-coupon bonds. The interest earned from the bonds will be used to pay the P5 billion principal owed to Landbank and E-PCIB.

The bank loans extended to Quedancor, which is engaged in production, processing, storage and marketing activities of farmers, is in line with the Agri-Agra Law required by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Quedancor had also fleshed out agreements with the Veterans Bank and the United Coconut Planters Bank.

Quedancor said the credit re-discounting line from Veterans Bank and UCPB worth P300 million will be offered as loans for livelihood programs of government employees, specifically related to agriculture and fishery. Quedancor serves as the banks' conduit for lending and collection.

The state-owned firm reported it chalked up a net income of P50 million last year, up by 100 percent from the previous year's P25 million.

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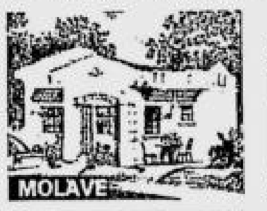

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A.Toyco Coaster Car Vans Rental (02)8023022/8006595

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CARS/VANS/BRIDAL 8969956

•L300 VAN T Revo 9139185•

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### CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN 3743803

1.5% CAR LOAN 6567685

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

BUSN DRS OFW 524-3197

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### BUY/SELL

Fully Paid Educ Plan 7800106 / 09177939632

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT ELITE PIANO CENTER Almost New:TERMS-7213124

### PETS

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### BILLIARDS

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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRAINING 5271590

### AUCTION SALE

VICTORY PAWNSHOP
At 45 Bonifacio Market EDSA Kalookan City will hold an Auction Sale of all expired items on Apr. 26, 2004 at 10 am Vicente Zamora -- Auctioneer

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PHYSICIAN, MIDWIFE CALL 682-2941

PROMO GIRLS & OFFICE STAFF 527-1590

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Republika ng Pilipinas
**PANGASIWAAN NG TUBIG AT ALKANTARILYA SA METRO MANILA**
Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
CORPORATE OFFICE
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105, Philippines

## INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) invites interested parties (the "Applicants") to pre-qualify and bid for the **MWSS Treated Bulk Water Supply Project** (the "Project") to supply a total of 400 MLD treated bulk water to the MWSS Concession Areas. The Project will be implemented pursuant to Republic Act No. 7718, the "Philippine BOT Law" and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) under the Build-Operate-and-Transfer (BOT) contractual arrangement.

Preparation of the Technical Study and Tender Documents for this Project was undertaken with the assistance of the B-O-T Center of the Department of Trade and Industry, and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Project Proponent shall be responsible for identifying the proposed water source(s), financing, feasibility study, detailed engineering design, construction, and operation and maintenance of the proposed treated bulk water supply system.

A complete set of Pre-qualification Documents may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00), starting **April 23, 2004**, at the address below:

**The Chairman**
**Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)**
**Office of the Senior Deputy Administrator**
**Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System**
**Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines**

Application for pre-qualification should be submitted in sealed envelopes, either delivered by hand, courier, or by registered mail, to the above address not later than 5:00 p.m. of **June 15, 2004**, and clearly marked "Applications to Pre-qualify for the MWSS Treated Bulk Water Supply Project". Reference time shall be the bundy clock located at the same office indicated above. Late submission shall not be accepted.

A pre-qualification conference will be held at 2:00 p.m. on **May 14, 2004**, at the conference room at the MWSS Sr. Deputy Administrator.

MWSS reserves the right to reject or accept any application, or to cancel the pre-qualification process and reject all applications. MWSS shall neither be liable for any such actions, nor be under any obligation to inform the applicant of the grounds for these actions.

MWSS assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of their application.

(Sgd.) **ORLANDO C. HONDRADE**
*Administrator*

(PDI - April 16, 23 & 30, 2004)

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**DBP** Development Bank of the Philippines

## INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on April 29, 2004, 2:00 p.m. at the DBP Head Office Auditorium, Sen. Gil Puyat cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

| CODE | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION | | MINIMUM BID |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| REAL ESTATE | | | | |
| METRO MANILA | | | | |
| | Columbian International Towers Condominium, No. 500 Santol Road, Sta. Mesa | Condominium units: | | |
| CWB-29 a | | 88 m² (CCT No. 49957), Suite 10-B | P | 2,112,000.00 |
| CWB-29 b | | 97.05 m² (CCT No. 49956), Suite 2-C | P | 1,552,800.00 |
| BATAAN | | | | |
| | Sta.Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis Camaya, Manveles: | Residential lots with bldg. & imprvmts: | | |
| AMD-ML-142 | Lot - 25 & 28 Blk -20 | 100 m² TCT Nos. T-229478 & T-229476 | P | 277,000.00 |
| AMD-ML-143 | Lot - 11 Blk - 9 | 50 m² TCT No. T-229486 | P | 183,700.00 |
| BATANGAS | | | | |
| AMD-ML-144 | Bo. Natu, Rosario | 4 contiguous agricultural lots (TCT Nos. T-118608 to T-118611) 89,371 m² | P | 6,618,600.00 |
| AMD-ML-145 | Corner J.B. Zuño and L. Corachea Sts., Brgy. Namuco, Rosario | 90 m² commercial lot (TCT-118604) with bldg. & imprvmnts. | P | 1,658,600.00 |
| | | Untitled agricultural riceland: | | |
| AMD-ML-146a) | Tilambo, Taysan | 44,560 m² (ARP No. 20-00743) | P | 3,119,200.00 |
| AMD-ML-146b) | | 21,445 m² (ARP No. 20-00742) | P | 1,501,800.00 |
| AMD-ML-146c) | | 21,662 m² (ARP No. 20-00741) | P | 1,516,300.00 |
| BULACAN | | | | |
| AMD-ML-147 | Brgy. Santol, Balagtas | 2 adjoining agro-industrial lots (TCT Nos. 421182 & 421183) 31,400 m² with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 16,784,400.00 |
| CWB-4 | Bo. Palimbang, Calumpit | 690 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-162779) with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 1,994,900.00 |
| CAVITE | | | | |
| | Acacia Homes, Area C, Brgy. Burol III, Dasmariñas | Residential lots with bldg. & imprvmts: | | |
| AMD-ML-148 | Lot - 6 Blk - 12 | 50 m² TCT No. T-1063276 | P | 178,000.00 |
| AMD-ML-149 | Lot -12 Blk - 9 | 80 m² TCT No. T-1063380 | P | 241,000.00 |
| AMD-ML-150 | Lot - 6 Blk - 2 | 80 m² TCT No. T-1063277 | P | 241,000.00 |
| AMD-ML-151 | Brgy. Talon, Amadeo | 1,151 m² agro-residential lot (TD-02-025-00067-R) with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 790,000.00 |
| LAGUNA | | | | |
| | San Carlos Village (Maria Luisa Subd., Phase II), Brgy. Banay-Banay, Cabuyao | Residential lots with bldg. & imprvmts.: | | |
| AMD-ML-152 | Lot - 26 Blk - 5 | 50 m² TCT No. T-536563 | P | 239,600.00 |
| AMD-ML-153 | Lot - 12 Blk - 2 | 71 m² TCT No. T-536566 | P | 349,700.00 |
| QUEZON | | | | |
| AMD-ML-154 | Bo. Pili, Sariaya | 2 parcels agro-residential lots (TCT Nos. 382136 & 382093) 78,442 m² with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 4,900,900.00 |
| PANGASINAN | | | | |
| AMD-ML-155 | Pagal District, San Carlos City | 4 adjoining industrial lots (TCT Nos. 32082 to 32085) 11,200 m² with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 12,000,000.00 |
| RIZAL | | | | |
| AMD-PY-156 | Lincoln Drive, Bo. Mayamot Antipolo City | 8 parcels residential lots (TCT Nos. 317013 to 317020) 5,029 m² with bldg. & imprvmts. | P | 7,938,700.00 |
| CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis) | | | | |
| AMD-EL-157 | La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak, Q.C. | One (1) unit Milling Machine, Cincinatti No. 4 | P | 53,700.00 |
| AMD-EL-158 | La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak, Q.C. | One (1) lot various abaca rope making machinery and equipment | P | 7,500,000.00 |
| AMD-EL-159 | 617 Bagumbayan St., Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila | Various printing machinery and equipment | P<br>P | 20,000.00 to<br>348,000.00 |
| AMD-EL-160 | Brgy. Paho, Libertad, Antique | One (1) Mobile Crane and other marble making machinery and equipment | P<br>P | 3,000.00 to<br>762,500.00 |

**BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:**

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers.
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2218/2252 for Code starting with AMD, and
926-1686 or 818-9511 loc. 1411 for CWB

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – April 15 & 16, 2004)

# Isuzu's RP unit to export AUVs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ISUZU Philippines Corp. will push for the export of its Crosswind vehicles amid expectations of lower domestic sales this year.

The statement came as Isuzu's local unit welcomed its new president, Yoshifumi Komura, who took over Toru Koyasu who returned to Japan.

"We have started exporting to Vietnam," he said. "If the Vietnam market continues to increase, we would catch up (with the demand)," said Isuzu vice president Ken Takashima.

He said Isuzu Philippines was providing completely knocked-down Crosswind vehicles to Vietnam where its counterpart—Isuzu Vietnam Corp.—assembles the units.

Takashima added: "We are also looking for chances to export to other markets. We have done some sample exports of the Crosswind to countries in Central America and the Caribbean."

"Our share in the Asian utility vehicles market in March was about 35 percent which is very high, last year it was about 24 percent," Takashima said.

Isuzu, however, will not lose its focus on the domestic market.

Takashima said Isuzu planned to increase its share in the local market by introducing new vehicles following the success of its latest pick up model, the D-Max.

He said Isuzu's focus was on increasing its share of the commercial vehicles market ,which it was "more or less maintaining."

Commercial vehicles include light trucks, trucks and buses, AUVs and light commercial vehicles.

According to the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association, Isuzu held 17 percent of the commercial vehicles market during the first quarter of the year.

Takashima said the company was pushing ahead with its goal of being the leader in the commercial vehicle segment, which rival Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. has been leading.

"That is not a very easy target, but we should be heading for that," he said.

"We have been known to introduce unique products and we will continue to do that," Takashima said.

According to him, Isuzu's current share in pick-up market was more or less 40 percent.

Further, Takashima said Isuzu had launched promotional campaigns that focused on the merits of the Isuzu diesel engine.

"We believe we have the best diesel engine in the world and we want the market to appreciate that."

The Japanese expatriate also said the firm had been planning in the the export of the Crosswind models.

Last month, Takashima said Isuzu expected total sales to go down by 3,000 units from the 13,000 units sold in 2003. He said the decline would be due to the new excise tax regime that increased prices of AUVs.

"But we are maintaining our drive for greater production efficiency, which gives us the flexibility to adopt to changes in demand.

**INNOVATIVE LPHI HOMES**
**British Ambassador Paul Dimond (left) recently visited key projects of Laguna Properties Holdings Inc. (LPHI), which make use of an innovative building system conceptualized in Britain. The Tex building system is used extensively in LPHI housing projects such as Sta. Catalina Homes in Bacoor, Cavite and Riego de Dios in Tanza, Cavite. Manuel J. Colayco (right), LPHI president, accompanied Ambassador Dimond to both sites.**

# Gov't pushes for wind energy dev't in North

ENERGY officials yesterday batted for wider participation by Nueva Ecija and Cabanatuan City business leaders in the bid to harness the province's vast potential in the generation of wind energy.

National Transmission Corp. president Alan Ortiz, speaking on behalf of Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr., said the government had already identified some 20 sites in the province for potential wind energy plants that could add some 121 megawatts to the Luzon power grid capacity.

The call was aired in a meeting with Nueva Ecija business leaders where energy officials presented the 10-year power development plan and Transco's P82-billion Luzon Island Transmission Augmentation program.

Ortiz said the government was eyeing the entry of an estimated P20.7 billion into the wind power sector, out of total prospective investments of P24 billion in renewable energy projects, including biomass, solar and ocean-powered generating plants for the entire country.

Transco also switched on the recently-completed P37-million Cabanatuan City substation expansion project.

The switch-on ceremony followed the signing of a memorandum of agreement for Transco's divestment of the management of this city's 69-kilovolt transmission line in a P12-million agreement with the Cabanatuan Electric Corp. (Celcor).

# Meridian Telekom bags deal in Bangladesh

MERIDIAN Telekoms Inc., the pioneer in wireless broadband technology in the Philippines, said an agreement was forged with X-net, a subsidiary of GrameenPhone Bangladesh, for Meridian to set up a wireless broadband infrastructure in that country.

The delivery and operation agreement includes the transfer of Meridian technology, network design and consultancy services. Under the agreement, Meridian will actively assist X-net in building its network.

Meridian's strong focus in research and development of wireless broadband solutions has enabled it to adapt state-of-the-art wireless technologies for local conditions and for technology transfer to other developing countries.

X-net, the licensed 3.5GHz operator in Bangladesh, is a subsidiary of GrameenPhone—the largest GSM mobile network operator in Bangladesh. Telenor, the largest telecommunications company in Norway is the majority owner of Grameenphone and together with Marubeni Corp. of Japan, own over 60 percent of the company.

## INCOME REPORTS

### Equitable PCI profit up 54.6%

EQUITABLE PCI Bank reported a consolidated net profit last year of P1.16 billion, up 54.6 percent from P754 million in the previous year.

Net interest income was higher 22 percent to P4.9 billion boosted by higher gross interest income. Operating expenses were down 6 percent to P9.4 billion while other income—driven largely by service charges, and commissions—was higher 11 percent to P8.55 billion in 2003.

### San Miguel Purefoods earnings rise

FEEDS and flour manufacturer San Miguel Purefoods Co. Inc. said its net earnings rose 15 percent to P794 million last year, from P690 million in 2002.

Gross profit was at P5.58 billion from P5 billion in 2002.

### Cosmos nets ₱544M

NET earnings of soft drinks bottler Cosmos Bottling Corp. fell 37 percent to P544 million in 2003 from P860 million in 2002.

Carbonated soft drinks registered flat growth in the midst of difficulty in the business environment, the company said in a report to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Volumes grew 7 percent last year as it felt the effects of a concentrate shortage in the first semester last year. Net sales revenue improved to P9.9 billion from P9 billion in 2002.

### Tanduay income hits ₱300M

LIQUIR company Tanduay Holdings Inc. reported a consolidated net income of P300 million last year or lower by 31 percent from P437 million.

The 2002 figure includes a P107 million gain from the sale of Tanduay Distillers' unused land in Laguna. Revenues from interest income dropped 47 percent.

In April last year it acquired a stake in Victorias Milling Co. Inc., the country's largest sugar miller through a five-year P300-million loan convertible to shares of the company.

### Fortune Cement profit up

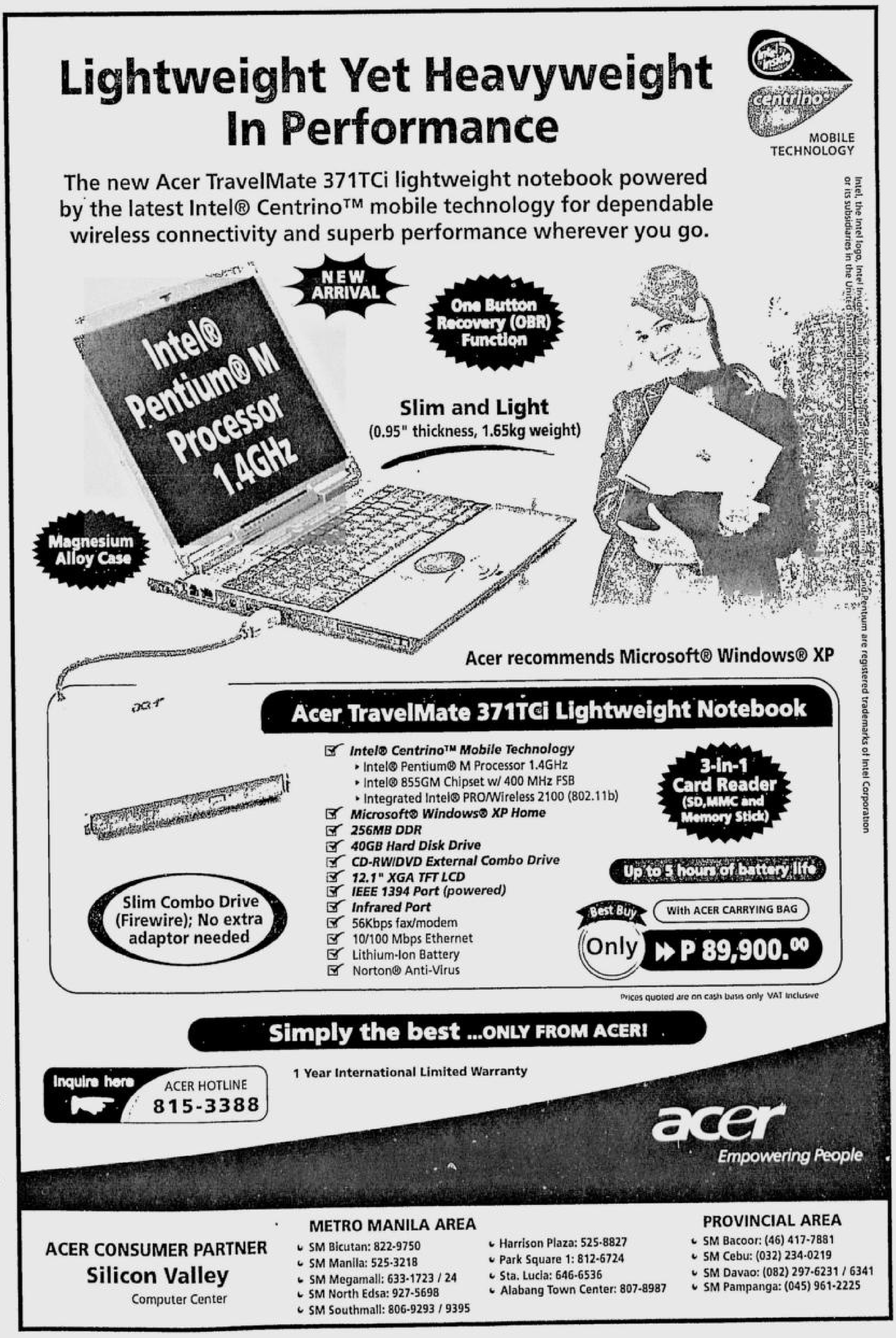
FORTUNE Cement said consolidated operating profit was at P209 million in 2003 or 89 percent better than the P111 million in the previous year. This was due to "operational efficiency" improved power and fuel consumption and lower fixed costs due to volume improvement and lower depreciation expenses.

Manila Water

**Manila Water apologizes for hotline downtime**

**The theft of a portion of PLDT's transmission lines along Katipunan Ave. in Quezon City recently halted services of Manila Water's 24-hour hotline, 1627. Communication lines to the Manila Water and MWSS offices in Balara were likewise affected by the incident.**

**Our 1627 hotline and other communication lines have now been fully restored. Manila Water apologizes to its (and the MWSS') customers in the east zone of Metro Manila who were affected by the unforeseen disruption. For all service inquiries, please call our 1627 hotline.**



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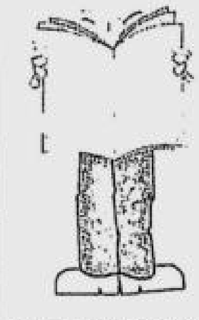

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Send complete resumé with picture not later than April 21, 2004 at 568 Katarungan St., Plainview, Mandaluyong City 1500, with telephone nos. 532-2735 or +63 919 718 9915. Call or look for Mr. Roberto Mendoza or Joaquin Mendoza.

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National Power Corporaton

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-MMSD 2004-007

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements.

| Schedule | Date/Time & Place of Bidding | Item Description | PR No./Inquiry No. | ABC |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | May 7, 2004<br>10:00 AM<br>Kañao Room | Mechanical Parts for Bantayan DPP | PB031027-MMJP9404 (PB2)<br>HO-BBD-03-0071<br>HO-BBD-03-0072 | P 2,324,000.00 |
| II | | Hauling Services and Rental of Storage Tanks including Depot Pumping Facilities for Catanduanes/ Masbate Operations | PB040407-MMSB0659 (PB2)<br>HO-CAT-04-0020 | P 8,520,000.00 |

NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules:

| Schedule | Date | Time | Place |
|---|---|---|---|
| Schedule II | April 27, 2004 | 10:00 AM | Kañao Function Room |

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Division, Materials Management Dept., of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 9245357/9245477 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php500.00 per schedule starting on **April 16, 2004**. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, MMSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/ Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit - One Percent (1%), Bank Guarantee - One and a half percent (1.5%),Surety Bond - Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids; and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) **LORENZO S. MARCELO**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
MMSD-NPC

(PDI - April 16 & 23 2004)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region V, Legazpi City

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR TRUCKING/HAULING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION V

**The National Food Authority, Regional Office No. V, Pier Site, Legazpi City** invites qualified Trucking/Hauling Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of Trucking/Hauling Services for NFA grains and sugar. The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

| | Activity | Date | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Issuance of Bid Documents | **April 13-19, 2004** | 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM |
| 2. | Pre-Bid Conference | **April 20, 2004** | 1:00 PM |
| 3. | Deadline for Submission of Bids/Eligibility Check and Opening of Bids | **April 27, 2004** | 10:00 AM |

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents may be obtained from RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-transferable/ non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos **(P3,000.00)**.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the Office of the Assistant Regional Director, NFA Regional Office No. V, Pier Site, Legazpi City with telephone numbers (052) 480-7399 / 480-7015 / 480-7085 / 820-0018 and fax number (052) 480-7900.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **JOSE B. GUEVARA**
Assistant Regional Director/
Chairman, Bidding Committee

(PDI - April 15 & 16, 2004)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region V, Legazpi City

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR FREIGHT SERVICES FOR NFA REGION V

**The National Food Authority, Regional Office No. V, Pier Site, Legazpi City** invites qualified Vessel Owners to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of Freight Services for the following routes:

a) Tabaco Port - Virac Port
b) Tabaco Port - Masbate City Port
c) Legazpi Port - Virac Port
d) Legazpi Port - Masbate City Port

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

| | Activity | Date | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Issuance of Bid Documents | **April 13-19, 2004** | 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM |
| 2. | Pre-Bid Conference | **April 20, 2004** | 10:00 AM |
| 3. | Deadline for Submission of Bids/Eligibility Check and Opening of Bids | **April 27, 2004** | 2:00 PM |

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents may be obtained from RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-transferable/ non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos **(P3,000.00)**.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the Office of the Assistant Regional Director, NFA Regional Office No. V, Pier Site, Legazpi City with telephone numbers (052) 480-7399 / 480-7015 / 480-7085 / 820-0018 and fax number (052) 480-7900.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **JOSE B. GUEVARA**
Assistant Regional Director/
Chairman, Bidding Committee

(PDI - April 15 & 16, 2004)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

## INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

The **National Food Authority (NFA)** is inviting all eligible palay Farmers' Organizations (FOs) to participate in the distribution of rice under the **"INSTITUTIONALIZED FARMERS AS DISTRIBUTORS"** (IFAD) Program of the National Food Authority.

All interested parties are advised to accomplished a Letter of Intent (LOI), copies of which are available at the NFA Provincial Offices in their respective areas, to be submitted within ten (10) working days after the last day of publication. They should likewise meet the following qualifications:

- Must be operational and registered with any of the appropriate registering agencies as listed below:
  - Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)
  - Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
  - Bureau of Labor Relations (BLR)
  - Bureau of Rural Workers (BRW)
  - National Irrigation Administration (NIA)
- Must be a member of a local farmers' action council or the Philippine Farmers' Advisory Board (PFAB).
- Must be a holder of NFA license as retailer/wholesaler and other incidental lines of activities, i.e., warehousing and transporting, if any.
- Must be a holder of Certificate of Operations and Good Standing issued by the appropriate registering agency, to be submitted to the concerned NFA Provincial Office.

Specifically, the NFA has allocated a total volume of some 1,000,000 bags of rice, 25% BKN, for this Program distributed among regions as follows:

| Region | Allocation |
|---|---|
| NCR | 4,700 |
| Ilocos Region | 93,200 |
| Cagayan Valley | 130,200 |
| Central Luzon | 139,900 |
| Southern Tagalog | 89,400 |
| Bicol | 68,100 |
| Western Visayas | 144,700 |
| Central Visayas | 21,700 |
| Eastern Visayas | 56,700 |
| Western Mindanao | 42,000 |
| Northern Mindanao | 47,400 |
| Southern Mindanao | 61,800 |
| Central Mindanao | 57,100 |
| ARMM | 43,100 |

For details, they may coordinate with the nearest NFA Office in their respective areas. For further inquiries, they may visit or contact NFA-DMO located at the 5th Flr., Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City with telephone nos. 712-1572, 712-1708 or 712-1564.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP**
Administrator

(PDI - April 14, 15 & 16, 2004)

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## INVITATION TO BID
## "AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS
### BID NO.: PMD-04-001

**THE PNOC – ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (PNOC-EDC) WILL CONDUCT PUBLIC BIDDING FOR THE SALE OF THE FOLLOWING JUNK AND UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS.**

| Item No. | Description | Qty. | Floor Price w/ 10% VAT |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. | **Fort Bonifacio, Taguig Metro Manila (c/o F.V. Legaspi)** | | |
| 1 | Assorted Junk Materials -<br>Assorted communication equipment, computer and peripherals<br>Assorted Lear Jet and Helicopter Spare Parts and Supplies | 1 lot | 13,750.00 |
| 2 | Pick-up, L200 Mitsubishi, Double Cab, Plate No. TJG-864 | 1 unit | 88,000.00 |
| 3 | Dental Operatory System | 1 unit | 16,500.00 |
| | **Sta. Ana Warehouse, Novaliches, Q.C. (c/o V.B. Eugenio)** | | |
| 4 | Elbows, Pipes, Gate Valves, Steel Racks | 1 lot | 58,850.00 |
| 5 | Sodium Silicate | 1 lot | 66,000.00 |
| II. | **Northern Negros Geothermal Project-Bgy. Mailum, Bago City, Negros Occidental (c/o R.V. Luceño)** | | |
| 1 | Assorted Household and Office Equipment | 1 lot | 19,800.00 |
| 2 | Portable Camp Quarters and Steel Container Van<br>Junk Scrap Materials (approx. 30 tons) | 1 lot | 121,000.00 |
| 3 | Assorted Used Tires (approx. 326 pcs.)<br>Assorted Used Batteries (approx. 94 pcs.) | 1 lot | 37,950.00 |
| 4 | Used Oil (approx. 23 drums) | 1 lot | 8,800.00 |
| III. | **Leyte Geothermal Production Field – Tongonan, Leyte (c/o M.C. Dilao)** | | |
| 1 | Various Household and Office Furniture and Equipment | 1 lot | 13,200.00 |
| 2 | Various Industrial Equipment and Detroit Engines | 1 lot | 16,500.00 |
| 3 | Toyota Land Cruiser BJ40 and Isuzu KB Spares | 1 lot | 33,000.00 |
| 4 | Joy Compressor Spares | 1 lot | 2,200.00 |
| 5 | Miscellaneous General, Electrical & Mechanical Spares | 1 lot | 27,500.00 |
| 6 | Furukawa Wheel Loader Spares | 1 lot | 16,500.00 |
| 7 | Komatsu Bulldozer/Grader Spares | 1 lot | 165,000.00 |
| 8 | Isuzu SOZ and CXZ Dumptruck Spares | 1 lot | 44,000.00 |
| 9 | Grove Crane Spares | 1 lot | 176,000.00 |
| 10 | Caterpillar, Backhoe Grader, 4TUT Pump and Kenworth Spares | 1 lot | 66,000.00 |
| 11 | Kuster Spares | 1 lot | 330,000.00 |
| 12 | FCDS Spares | 1 lot | 27,500.00 |
| 13 | Hiab Boom Truck Spares | 1 lot | 16,500.00 |
| 14 | Various Scrap Metal & Drilling Float, Shoe/Collar of Assorted Sizes | 1 lot | 121,000.00 |
| 15 | Used Fiat Allis & Komatsu Rollers of Assorted Sizes and C-Frame | 1 lot | 33,000.00 |
| 16 | Various Light Vehicle, Heavy & Industrial Spares | 1 lot | 5,500.00 |
| 17 | Used Oil | 1 lot | 44,000.00 |
| 18 | Assorted Used Tires (approx. 1,243 pcs.)<br>Assorted Used Tires with Rim (approx. 13 pcs.) | 1 lot | 77,000.00 |
| 19 | Assorted Used Batteries (approx. 479 pcs.) | 1 lot | 13,200.00 |
| 20 | Various Defective Tools and Equipment | 1 lot | 18,700.00 |
| 21 | Filler Rods and Welding Spares | 1 lot | 275,000.00 |
| 22 | Various Office Equipment and Fabricated Items | 1 lot | 5,500.00 |
| 23 | Various Aluminum Off-cuts | 1 lot | 99,000.00 |
| 24 | Construction and Mechanical Equipment | 1 lot | 19,800.00 |
| 25 | ACSR Cable Off-cuts | 1 lot | 66,000.00 |
| 26 | Toyota Land Cruiser BJ40 Spares and Chassis Frame | 1 lot | 8,800.00 |
| 27 | Various Drilling Tools, Equipment and Scraps<br>Toyota Land Cruiser, PSA-875 | 1 lot | 572,000.00 |
| IV. | **Mindanao Geothermal Production Field – Kidapawan, North Cotabato (c/o E.A. Jereza)** | | |
| 1 | Toyota Land Cruiser, Hard Type, PN GCE 160 and Spare Parts | 1 unit | 71,500.00 |
| 2 | Assorted Mechanical Tools, Medical, Office and Household Equipment & Supplies<br>Assorted Genset, Welding Equipment Spares<br>Universal Wireline Mathey Trailer Spares | 1 lot | 9,900.00 |
| 3 | Satellite Equipment (Cable TV) consisting of TVRO System, Decoder & Mash Wire<br>Satellite Dish (3 m dia & 5m.dia.) | 1 lot | 55,000.00 |
| 4 | Rock Bits 8 ½ (11 pcs.) & 12 ¼ (14 pcs.) | 25 pcs | 22,000.00 |
| 5 | Used Tires (384 pcs.) & Batteries (68 pcs.) | 1 lot | 27,500.00 |
| 6 | Slotting Machines with drive motors & 55 lt. rail | 4 units | 5,500.00 |
| 7 | Sleeper/Messhall Van, 20 footer | 2 units | 1,100.00 |
| 8 | Assorted Scrap and Junk Metals (Approx. 15 tons) | 1 lot | 38,500.00 |

For details of above items, please refer to Bid documents or call Property Management Department at Tel. No. 8936001 local 5137.

Interested bidders may secure the bid forms from Property Management Department or at any of the above Project Sites starting April 14, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Two Hundred (P200.00).

Deadline for submission of bids is on May 7, 2004, 10:00 a.m. at PNOC-EDC, Property Management Department, First Floor, Building 5, Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila or at any of the above PNOC-EDC Project Sites and publicly opened simultaneously immediately thereafter.

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference and inspection shall be conducted on the following dates:

| VENUE | DATE/TIME |
|---|---|
| PNOC-EDC Fort Bonifacio (include items in Sta. Ana whse.) | April 22, 2004, 9:00 A.M. |
| Northern Negros Geothermal Project | April 26, 2004, 10:00 A.M. |
| Leyte Geothermal Production Field | April 28, 2004, 10:00 A.M. |
| Mindanao 1 Geothermal Production Field | April 30, 2004, 10:00 A.M. |

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality found therein or to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC. The decision of PNOC-EDC shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **Mary Ann L. Matibag**
Manager
Property Management Dept.

(PDI – April 16, 2004)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region IV, Batangas City

## NOTICE OF SALE THROUGH MARKET DETERMINED PRICING SMDP BULLETIN NO. -2004-D-01

As authorized per AO-2K4-D-009, The National Food Authority Region IV wishes to invite all NFA licensed grains businessmen to participate in the Sale through Market Determined Pricing (SMDP) of the following stocks:

| PROVINCE | VARIETY | Volume (50 kg bags) | Indicative Price P/kg | Indicative Price P/50kg bag |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laguna | TGER 25% | 28,200 | P15.00 | P750.00 |
| Quezon | TGER 25% | 17,400 | P15.00 | P750.00 |
| | TOTAL | 45,600 | | |

For big retailers and licensed grains businessmen, sale shall be for the whole lot, "as is where is" no selection basis. However, for small/medium retailers, the volume that they can bid shall be limited to their declared capitalization. Offerors shall be required to post a Bid Bond in the form of Cash, Manager's Check or Cashier's check payable to NFA according to the following schedule:

1. Bid Retailers/Grains Businessmen - 10% of the value of the total volume bidded
2. Small and Medium Retailers - 5% of the value of the total volume bidded

The SMDP will be conducted at NFA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NFA Regional Office at Balagtas,Batangas City on the following schedules:

| | ACTIVITIES | DATE | TIME |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Issuance of Invitation to Offer and Tender Forms | April 16-20, 2004 | 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM |
| 2 | Pre SMDP Conference | April21, 2004 | 10:00 AM |
| 3. | SMDP Proper | April 21, 2004 | 2:00 PM |

In case of SMDP failure or if some stocks will not be sold, another SMDP shall be conducted on **April 28, 2004** and every Wednesday thereafter at the same time and venue until all the stocks are sold

The SMDP Requirements, Terms and Conditions, and Tender Forms can be secured at the NFA Regional Office Balagtas, Batangas City. For further inquiries, please contact the SMDP Committee Chairman Ruben S. Rimando at telephone Nos. (043) 723-3325 and 723-2186.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR INFORMALITIES FOUND THEREIN AND ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH IN ITS JUDGMENT ARE MOST REASONABLE AND ADVANTAGEOUS TO NFA. THE DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE AS CONFIRMED BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR SHALL BE DEEMED FINAL.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO**
*Asst. Regional Director & SMDP Chairman*

(PDI - April 16, 17 & 18 2004)

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PNOC
The Energy Company

*PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION*
*PNOC Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila*
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*Direct Line: 840-2024 / Fax No.: (632) 840-1459*

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites interested contractors to apply for pre-qualification and submit sealed bids for the project:

**Concreting of Open Yard of PNOC EC ESB in Mabini, Batangas**
**BX04-559**

The Approved Budget for the Contract is PhP4,833,694.80 chargeable against PNOC EC fund

The Contractor shall provide the manpower, labor, equipment and materials needed to perform and complete the concreting of open yard (3,723 square meters), construction of perimeter wall (248.24 meters) and other related works necessary for the project.

Pre-qualification documents shall be available for issuance from the PNOC EC Operation Support Group (c/o Mr. Carlos L. Mejias) starting **March 30, 2004** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS Two Hundred (PhP200.00). Only contractors who can submit all the pre-qualification requirements on or before **April 28, 2004** are eligible to purchase the bid documents

Bid documents shall be available to eligible bidders starting **April 29, 2004** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS One Thousand (PhP1,000.00).

The bidding shall utilize a two (2) sealed envelope system. The first envelope shall contain the Technical Bid and the second envelope shall contain the Financial Bid. The Technical & Financial Bid shall be submitted in two (2) sets each at the above address on or before **3:00 P.M.** of **May 18, 2004** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on **May 4, 2004, 1:00 P.M.** at PNOC EC ESB, Mabini, Batangas.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC-EC.

This publication is also posted in our website at www.pnoc-ec.com.ph and in the DBM website at www.procurementservices.net

(Sgd.) **E.S. San Jose**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - April 16, 2004)

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*Our Dearest Papa*

## Vicente "Titing" C. Tanseco, Sr.

April 12, 1919 - April 12, 2004

of Catbalogan, Samar and Ozamiz City, peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 85. His loving wife, Charing (+) and his children, Thelma, Toti, Tito, Fely, Narcy, Lito, Bing, Malie, Tony, Johnny, Charry and Romy, sons and daughters-in-law, sisters, Ramona and Lolita, and his grandchildren and great grandchildren request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Mira-Nila Homes/Tierra Pura Homes, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Funeral mass will be held at 3:00 pm on Saturday, April 17, 2004 at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish. Cremation services will follow at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina.

"To do your will is my delight; my God, your Law is in my heart."
Psalm 40:9.

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*He who from zone to zone*
*Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight*
*In the long way that I must tread alone,*
*Will lead my steps aright.*
*William Cullen Bryant, "To a Waterfowl"*
(Tagoy's favorite verse)

## SANTIAGO C. DIVINAGRACIA

14 April 1931 – 14 April 2004
Ateneo de Manila University College of Law, Class of 1955

His loving wife Ellen Roldan; children Elsa, John Nelson (†), Ruth, Ann, Ricardo and Asuncion Jamerlan, and Emily; grandchildren Claudio and Isabel Elena Wilson and Alfonso Divinagracia; siblings Amparo D. Sarabia and Floro; siblings-in-law Jeanette and Milagros Divinagracia, Eugenio and Susan Roldan, Estela and Robert Hewett; beloved cousins Emilia, Rosario and Juanita Divinagracia, and other relatives request for prayers for his eternal joy.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 23 Delgado St., Iloilo City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 18 April 2004 at the Christ the King Memorial Park after Mass at 9 o'clock a.m. at the Santa Maria Catholic Church, Gen. Blanco St., Iloilo City.

*In lieu of flowers, the family will appreciate donations to the John Nelson R. Divinagracia Memorial Scholarships Fund, care of U.P. in the Visayas Foundation, Infante Avenue, Iloilo City.*

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***For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.***

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438 Cementina St., Pasay City, Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376, 826-9682, (0915) 712-1220
**SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH**
Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel Nos. 843-8838/30, Fax No. 843-9223
**SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH**
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044
**ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH**
Magallanes Village, Makati City, Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284
**ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL**
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila, Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
**ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES**
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tels. 372-5084, 410-9286/87
**UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS**
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila, Tels. 493-4458, 493-4540
**VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES**
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City, Tels. 831-3797, 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836
**WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES**
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila, Tel. 302-5447
**ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES**
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna
Tels. (049) 562-1668, 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

---

## MARIO "TOTOY" LACANILAO RUEDA SR.

**of San Pablo City**

*Peacefully returned home to our loving father on April 13, 2004 at the age of 65.*

His beloved family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence, 146 Bagong Bayan, San Pablo City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, April 20, 2004, 2:00 p.m. at San Pablo City Memorial Park.

---

## MARGARET "MAGGIE" D. SHEA

1918 - 2004

*Peacefully returned to the Lord on April 14, 2004*

Wake at St. Ignatius Village Chapel, Quezon City
Interment on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 18
after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

Dear Pious reader, please pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

# CLASSIFIEDS

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY

## INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF SCRAP METALS AND WASTE OIL

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: **APRIL 30, 2004** TIME: **2:00 PM** PLACE: **MMD, NPC HO, DILIMAN, QC.**

The National Power Corporation will conduct a public bidding for the sale of the following items:

| Item | Description and Location | Minimum Bid Price |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | One (1) Lot - Junk and Scrap Metals consisting of Unserviceable, Used and Retired Plant Parts (per Listing and Pictures attached to the Bid Forms) Located at TIWI GPP, Tiwi, Albay Province. | P 4,692,704.00/Lot |
| 2. | One (1) Lot - Waste Oil consisting of Used Lube Oil and Sludge Oil, approximately 300,000 liters and stored at Tanks 1 & 2, Setting/De-watering Basins, and Pipeline at Pinamucan DPP, Batangas City. | P 600,000.00/Lot |

ALL OFFERS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN THE BID FORM WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. **PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE.**
2. **LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER OR FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (2003, original or BIR certified true copy).**
3. **FOR BIDDERS OF ITEM NO. 2, EMB-DENR ACCREDITATION AS WASTE TRANSPORTER AND WASTE TREATER IS REQUIRED.**

All interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid forms upon presentation of a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return and payment of P500.00 / set which is non-refundable. For inquiries see or call Mr. S. V. Lomuntad, Jr. at MMD, NPC Head Office, corner Agham Road and Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 924-5384.

**Inspection and actual sounding of waste oil shall be held on April 28, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. at Pinamucan Diesel Power Plant. All prospective bidders are required to be present on this date to witness the sounding of the waste oil. Also, all bidders are required to secure certification from Pinamucan DPP that they attended the sounding of the waste oil.**

**Deadline for the issuance of the bid forms is on April 27, 2004 until 4:30 p.m.**

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI - April 15, 16 & 17, 2004)

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UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM
Diliman, Quezon City
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

A. The University of the Philippines Diliman hereby invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility to bid for:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.) Contract for Security: | North Sector: 218 | South Sector: 130 | Security personnel |
| 2.) Contract for Janitors: | North Sector: 175 | South Sector: 157 | Janitorial personnel |

B. The following eligibility requirements in two copies, duly certified must be submitted to the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) at Instructional Materials Corp. Building (National Book Development Board), A. Regidor Street fronting the PAG-ASA Astronomical Observatory, U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:

1.) SEC/DTI/Cooperative Development Registration Papers
2.) 2004 Business License/Permit
3.) Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2002 & 2003) with accompanying Audited Financial Statements marked "received" by the BIR, and
4.) A. For Security Agency
    1. Type and number of firearms with license/communication equipment/vehicles the agency has.
    2. Certification of membership in good standing from the PADPAO.
  B. For Janitorial Agency
    1. Type and number of janitorial equipment/materials the agency has.
5.) List of past and present and on-going contracts (clients) including awarded contracts yet to be started, stating therein the value or total contract cost of projects and the year/period covered by the contract.
6.) SSS/NLRC (DOLE) Clearance for the last three (3) years.
7.) Duly notarized statement of the duly authorized representative of the company that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, offices or corporations.

**DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE BIDDING DOCUMENTS**

The above mentioned requirements must be completely submitted in two (2) separate folders with Table of Contents and properly tabbed. Otherwise, the same will not be accepted by the SPMO.

**NOTE: * ONLY ELIGIBLE BIDDERS WILL BE ISSUED THE INVITATION TO BID DOCUMENTS AND BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.**

C. Deadline for submission. **30 April 2004**
D. Pre-bidding and bidding schedules shall be announced to all eligible bidders.
E. The University of the Philippines reserves the right to review the qualifications of all selected bidders, subject to technical, financial and production criteria, reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect therein and accept the offer considered most advantageous to the University.
F. For further particulars, please inquire from Mr. Pedro E. Fajardo, Chief, SPMO, anytime during office hours at the above mentioned address or call Tel. No. 920-5374 (direct line) and 920-5301 local 4331, 4911 and 4913.

(Sgd.) **EMERLINDA R. ROMAN**
*Chancellor*

(PDI - April 16 & 23, 2004)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT
WESTERN VISAYAS
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Telefax # (033) 3210312 / 3211036
E-mail: dohrfo6@philwebinc.com

SENTRONG SIGLA
Health ang una!

## INVITATION TO BID

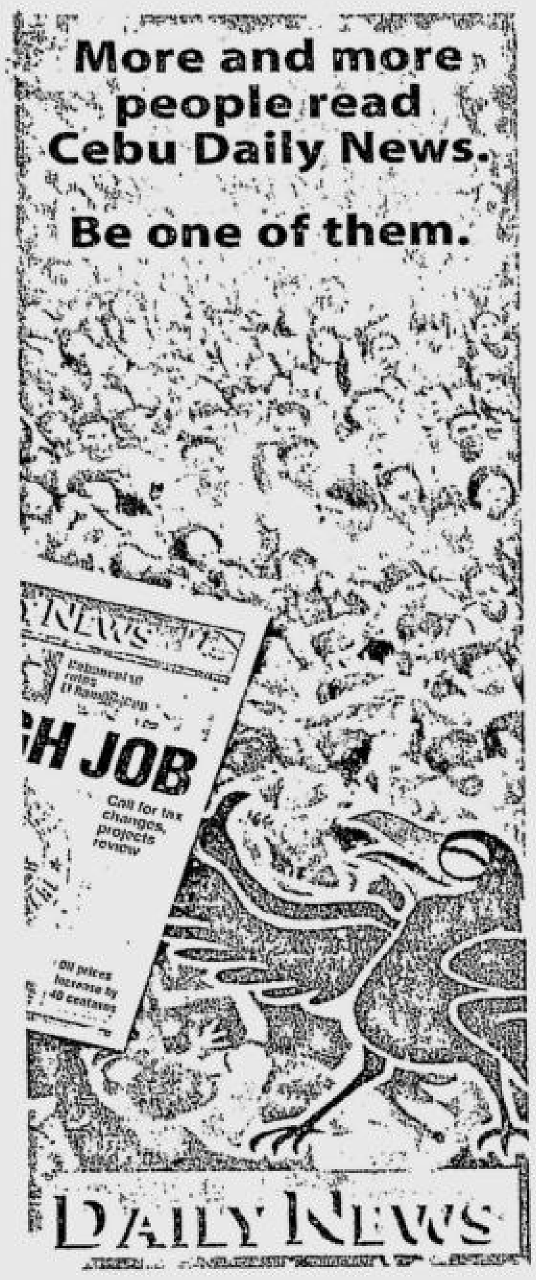
The Department of Health – Center for Health Development – Western Visayas, Mandurriao, Iloilo City is inviting duly DOH Accredited Suppliers to participate in the **PUBLIC BIDDING FOR DRUGS, MEDICINES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND LABOR & CATERING/BOARD AND LODGING.**

*Instructions, Terms and Conditions:*

1. A complete set of bid tender documents can be secured from RBAC-Drugs & Meds Secretariat, DOH CHD – WV, Mandurriao, Iloilo City beginning March 29, 2004 after having been accredited. Bid quotations shall be duly signed by the supplier / contractor / caterer on every page of the bid tender.
2. Public bidding will be conducted on the following dates at 9:00 AM:
    April 15, 2004 – Construction materials and labor
    April 16, 2004 – Catering / Board and Lodging
    April 19, 2004 – Drugs and Medicines
3. A re bidding will be conducted on the following dates:
    April 21, 2004 – Construction Materials and Labor (9:00 AM)
    – Catering / Board and Lodging (2:00 PM)
4. Bids shall be accompanied by a 1% Bidder's Bond of the approved budget cost for the items / services to be bid, in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit; one and a half percent (1 ½%) in the form of bank guarantee; two and a half percent (2 ½%) in the form of surety bond, and one hundred percent (100%) in the form of foreign government guarantee.
5. The BAC reserves the right to confiscate the bid bond should the winning bidder refuse to accept the award and to reject any or all bids which may be considered most advantageous to the government.
6. Bidders are invited to be present at the time and place stated above where the bids will be opened.
7. The winning bidder shall post a Performance Bond equivalent to 5% of the Approved contract price in the form of cash, manager's check, certified check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit; ten percent (10%) in the form of bank guarantee, thirty percent (30%) in the form of surety bond and one hundred percent (100%) in the form of foreign government guarantee immediately upon receipt of job order / purchase order.
8. The right is reserved to reject any or all bids or to accept such bids which may be considered most advantageous to the government and to annul bidding process and reject all bids anytime prior to award or contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the grounds for DOH's action.

(Sgd.) **ZENAIDA M. VILLAREAL, MD, MPH**
Chief, Local Health Assistance Division
Chairperson, RBAC

(PDI - April 16 & 17, 2004)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## EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

*For inquiries, call:*
687-6963 • 687-6972

RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | PAY CHECK | 11:50, 2:20, 4:50<br>7:20, 9:50 | PG-13 |
| 2 | THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST | 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10 | PG-13 |
| 3 | TAKING LIVES | 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00 | R-18 |
| 4 | PETER PAN | 11:20, 1:40, 4:00<br>6:20, 8:40, 10:55 | GP |

## POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST<br>PG13<br>11:40, 2:10, 5:00, 7:30, 10:10 | PETER PAN<br>GP<br>12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40 | TAKING LIVES<br>R18<br>1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:20 |
| TWISTED<br>R13<br>12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20 | UNINVITED<br>R13<br>1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20 | PAYCHECK<br>PG13<br>12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30 |

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

## THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS

DOLBY DIGITAL

NOW SHOWING

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CINEMA 1 | PAYCHECK<br>11:25, 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:50 | P13 |
| CINEMA 2 | PETER PAN<br>11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50 | GP |

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA 7224486

**MUSIC MUSEUM**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| APR 16 25 | "MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL" | 4 00PM |
| APR 26 27 | GARY V | 8 00 PM |

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

After X-Men & LXG comes a new special-effects-packed comicbook adventure !

**PREPARE TO BE BLOWN AWAY APRIL 21 !**

MTRCB ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed

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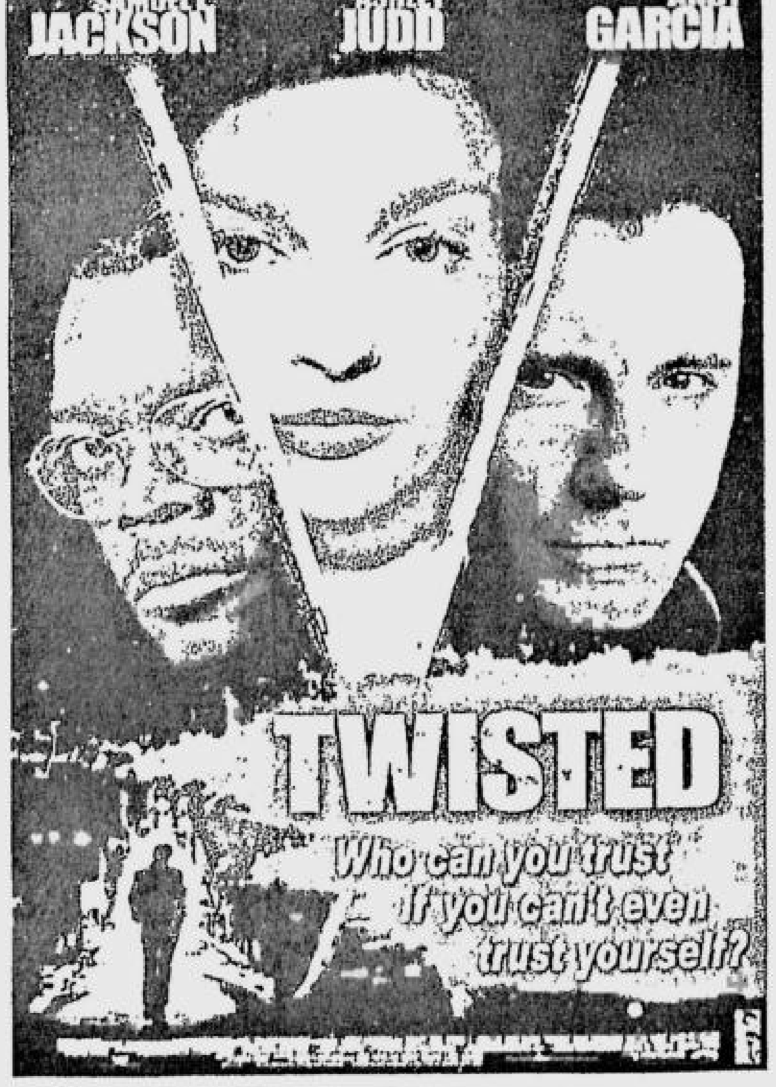
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE

**NOW SHOWING**

After *"Kiss the Girls"* & *"High Crimes"*, Ashley Judd returns in another suspense thriller that will keep you at the edge of your seats from beginning to end.



## Araneta Center
## ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

### ALI MALL CINEPLEX

| | |
|---|---|
| Ali 3 | MASIKIP SA DIBDIB |
| Ali 4 | PAYCHECK |
| Ali 5 | THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST |
| Ali 6 | PETER PAN |
| Ali 7 | TAKING LIVES |

### NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL

Open Daily 4 PM to 10 PM

### ARANETA COLISEUM

| | |
|---|---|
| APR 16 | REWIND PLUS DOBLE REVO DOUBLE PREMYO |
| APR 17 | 18TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LORD'S FLOCK |
| APR 18 | PBA : COKE VS. FEDEX |
| APR 20 | NCA 7 - COCK DERBY |
| APR 21 | PBA : SHELL VS. SAN MIGUEL |
| APR 22 | NCA 7-COCK DERBY |
| APR 24 | MY GIFT PIOLO PASCUAL 1ST TIME IN CONCERT |
| APR 25 | PBA : COKE VS. PUREFOODS |
| APR 26 | SEARCH FOR MS. QUEZON CITY RED CROSS |

For tickets call TicketNet at 911-5555

## THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

| MANILA | |
|---|---|
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | CLOSED |
| MIRAMAR | SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA |
| ODEON | X-MEN 2 |
| ODEON-2 | BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN |
| ROBEN | BOLD STAR |
| TANDEM-1 | SUGAT |
| TANDEM-2 | KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO |
| TIMES | SPY LEGEND OF TROCCOLE |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| ACT-2 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| ACT-3 | ORIGINAL SIN |
| ACT-4 | HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY |
| CORONET A | LIGAYA / NANABIK |
| CORONET B | A MAN APART |
| QUEZON-1 | BERTUD NG PUTIK |
| REMAR | X-MEN 2 |
| REMAR-2 | BOLD STAR |
| **NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA** | |
| A | KASIPING |
| B | CLOSED |
| C | |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-5401 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | ACACIA |
| CINEMA-2 | PUNLA |
| CINEMA-3 | UNINVITED |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | SCOOBY DOO 2 |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | HOUSE OF THE DEAD |
| CINEMA-6 | SORUM |
| CINEMA-7 | NANANABIK |
| CINEMA-8 | VENUS |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | PASSION OF THE CHRIST |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | PAYCHECK |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | PETER PAN |
| CINEMA-12 | TAKING LIVES |
| CINEMA-14 | TWISTED |
| CINEMA-15 | MASIKIP SA DIBDIB |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-3 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| **NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN** | |
| (LAS PIÑAS) | SCOOBY DOO 2 |
| CINEMA-1 | MASIKIP SA DIBDIB |
| CINEMA-2 | HIDALGO |
| CINEMA 4 | [illegible] |
| **UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL** | |
| (PARAÑAQUE) | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-1 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| CINEMA-2 | MEN IN BLACK II |
| CINEMA-4 | SELDA |

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Imagine a world where you can fly... where you never have to grow up or grow old.

Three major Hollywood studios – Columbia, Revolution & Universal Studios -- join forces to present an epic multi-million dollar live-action film filled with unbounded imagination, breath-taking adventure and dazzling visual effects.

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## MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 ACACIA
3 PAY CHECK
4 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 TWISTED
6 TAKING LIVES
7 PETER PAN
8 BOOBITA ROSE
9 UNINVITED
10 PETER PAN

**EASTWOOD CINEMAS**
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 PAY CHECK
2 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 TAKING LIVES
4 PETER PAN

**Masagana CINEMA 2000**
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 TWISTED
3 ACACIA

**starmall Movies**
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
TAKING LIVES
3 BOOBITA ROSE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) TWISTED
5

**METROPOLIS star**
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 TAKING LIVES
2 BOOBITA ROSE
3 TWISTED
4 PETER PAN
5 PAY CHECK
6 PASSION OF THE CHRIST

**star**
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
2 SCOOBY DOO-2

**PREMIERE CINEMA**
(Makati City) tel 892.2503
THX

**Centre Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
2 GOTHIKA

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 MASIKIP
3
4

**GOTESCO CINEMA**

**Gotesco City**
(Manila) tel 734.8588
RESERVE
5
6
7 (DTS)
8 (SDDS)
9 (DOLBY)

**Gotesco Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 TAKING LIVES
2 PETER PAN
3 BOOBITA ROSE
4 (SDDS) TWISSTED
5 PAY CHECK
6 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
7 (DTS) UNINVITED
8 VENUS
9 ACACIA

**Gotesco Commonwealth**
tel 951.0083
1 RESERVE
2
3
4 (DOLBY)
5

**Gotesco Ortigas**
tel 656.6795
1 ACACIA
2 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
3 TAKING LIVES
4 BOOBITA ROSE
5 PASSION OF THE CHRIST

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 RESERVE

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson
Lords

**Mandaluyong**
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 TWISSTED
3 TAKING LIVES
4 PETER PAN

**Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto**
**SUPER CINERAMA**
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 PETER PAN
3 TWISSTED
4 BOOBITA ROSE
5 TAKING LIVES

**Berma Cinema**
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 ACACIA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
**Araneta Center**
**Ali MALL CINEPLEX 7**
Tel No. 911-3101 Loc. 021-0042-0400
1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 BOOBITA ROSE
4 PAYCHECK
5 (DTS) PASSION OF CHRIST
6 PETER PAN
7 TAKING LIVES

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 PAY CHECK
2 BOOBITA ROSE
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

**Cine Nepo**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 ACACIA
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

**Cine Nepo**
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 THE GRUDGE-2
3 PAY CHECK
4 50 FIRST DATE

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 TAKING LIVES
3 (DTS) PETER PAN

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 (DTS) TAKING LIVES
3 (DOLBY) PAY CHECK
4 PETER PAN

**Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall**
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 (DOLBY) PETER PAN
3 PAY CHECK
4 TAKING LIVES

**Cinema 2000 Cinemagix**
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 50 FIRST DATE
2 GRUDGE-2
3 (DOLBY) SCOOBY DOO-2

**Cinema 2000 Metrotown**
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 HAUNTED OFFICE
2 HIDALGO
3 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
4 SCOOBY DOO-2

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 BOOBITA ROSE
3 HIDALGO

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
2 KARIBAL
3 PORNOGRAPHER
4 BOOBITA ROSE

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 PETER PAN
2 BOOBITA ROSE
3 PAY CHECK
4 TAKING LIVES
5 HIGHWAY MEN

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Binan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 VENUS
2 ACACIA

**Olivarez Los Baños**
tel (049) 249.2558
1 PETER PAN
2 TAKING LIVES
3 BOOBITA ROSE

**Mega Center Mall**
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 GRUDGE-2
2 50 FIRST DATE
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 BOOBITA ROSE

**Cabuyao**
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914
1 RESERVE

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 THE GRUDGE-2
3 HIDALGO
4 TAKING LIVES

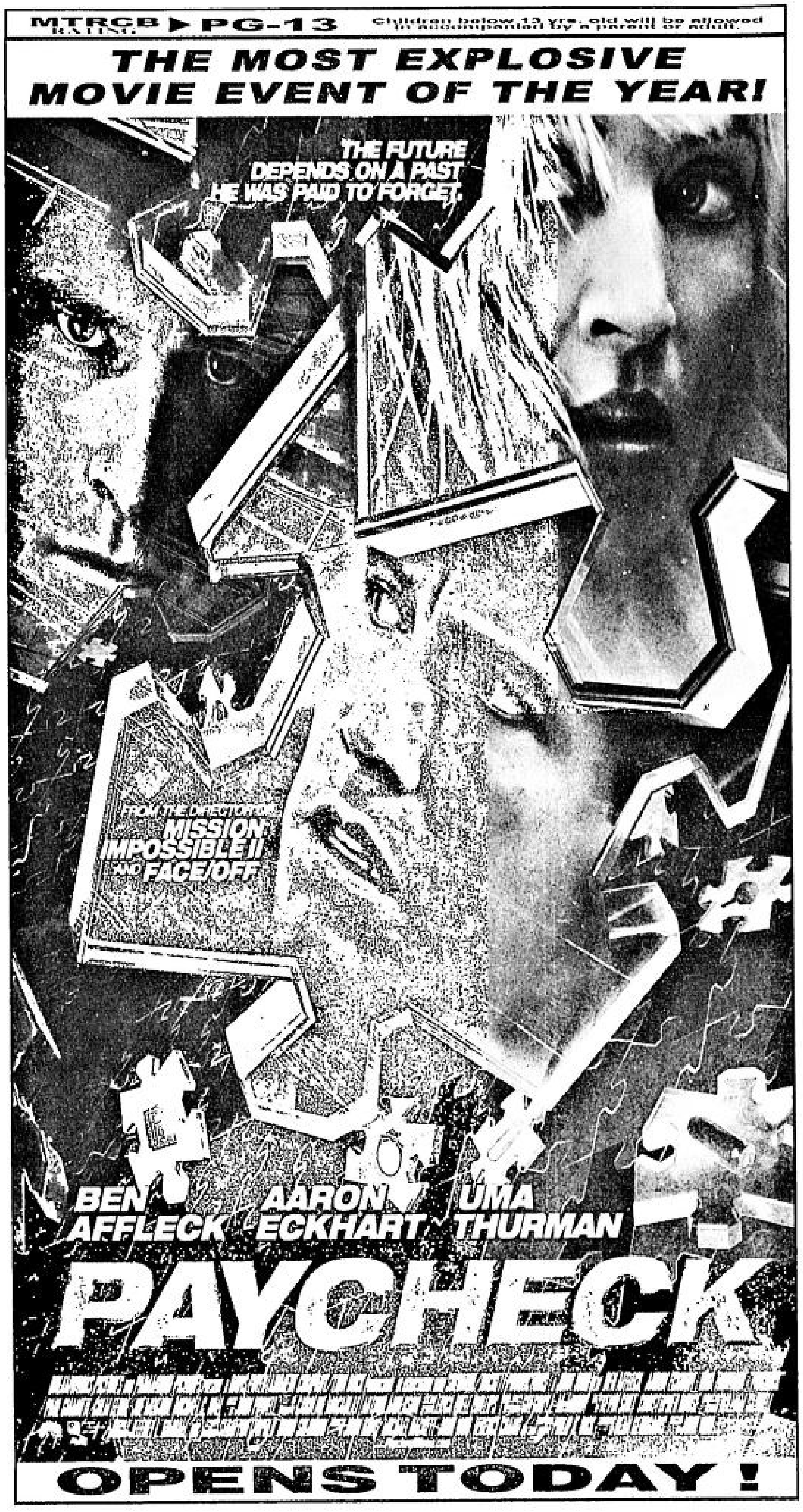
**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 BOOBITA ROSE
2 KARIBAL

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

**FESTIVAL CINEMA**
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

SCOOBY-DOO 2 MONSTERS UNLEASHED
NOW SHOWING



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

THE MOST EXPLOSIVE MOVIE EVENT OF THE YEAR!

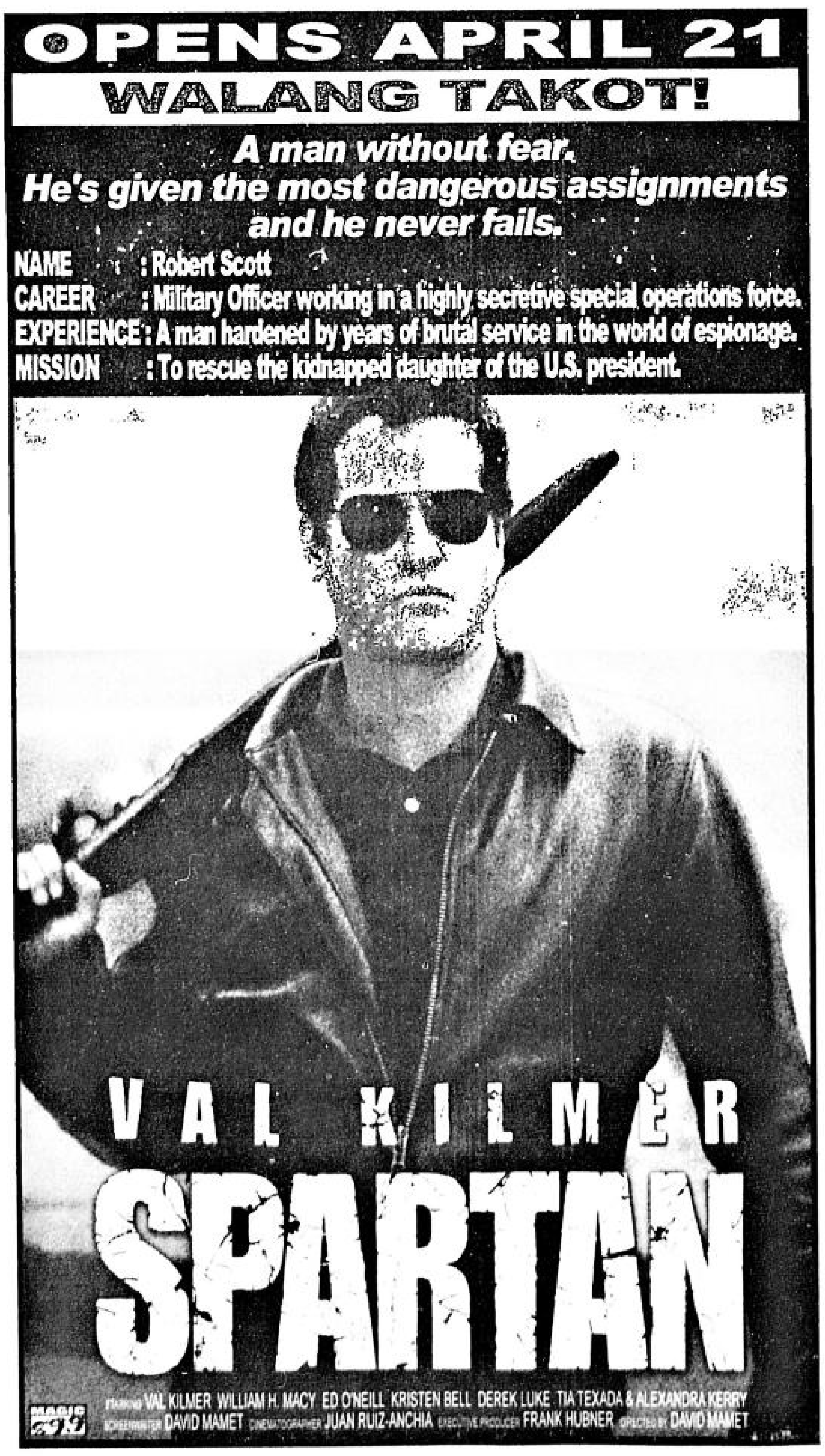
THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON A PAST HE WAS PAID TO FORGET.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE II AND FACE/OFF

BEN AFFLECK AARON ECKHART UMA THURMAN

PAYCHECK

OPENS TODAY!



OPENS APRIL 21

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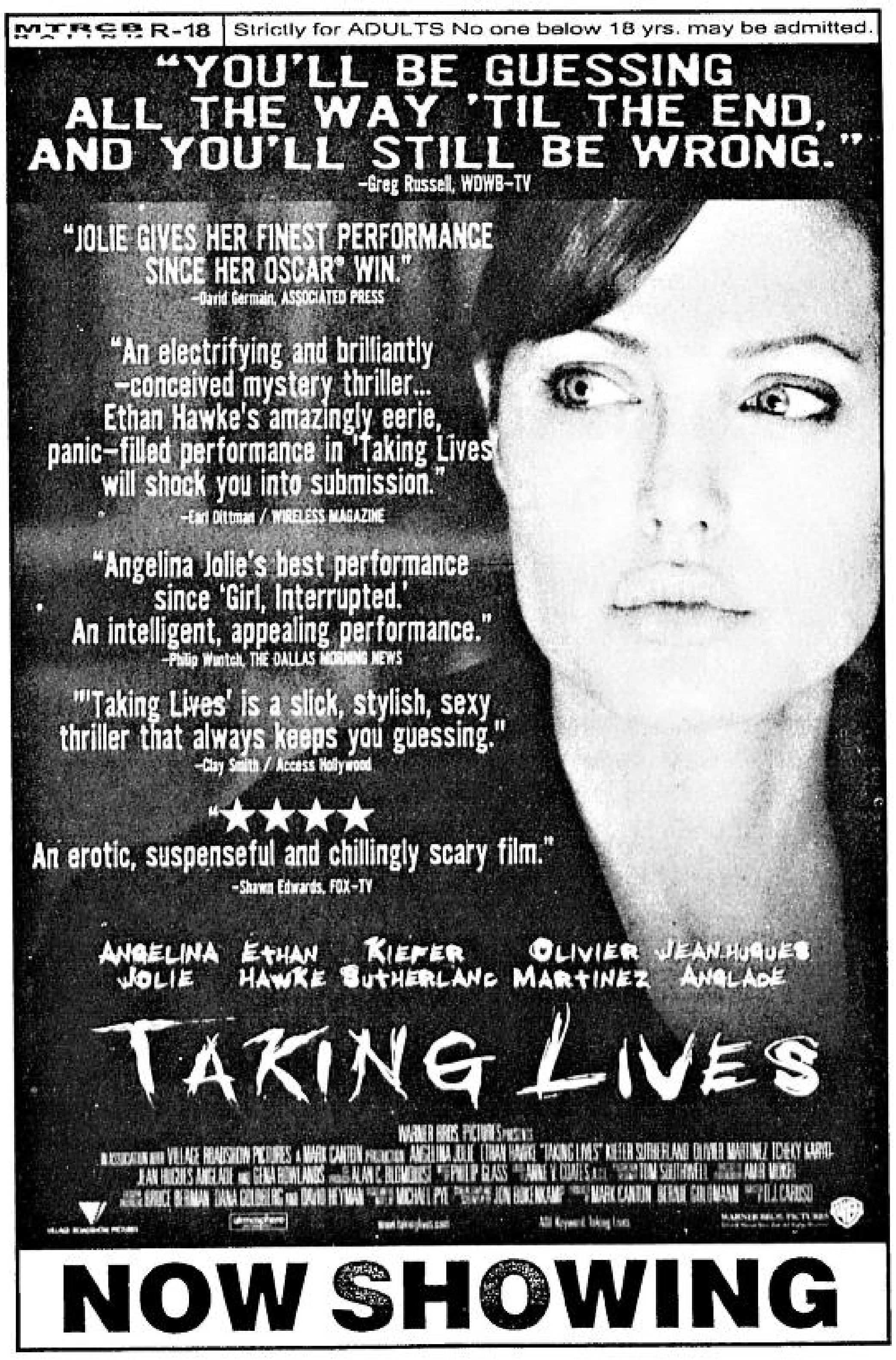

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FIRST THREE MONTHS

# Subic Freeport exports up 17% to $211M

SUBIC Freeport locators posted a 17-percent growth in exports to $211 million in the first quarter from $180.3 million in the same period last year, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA Chair Felicito C. Payumo said exports continued to move up as demand for computers and other electronic products rebounded from a recent slump.

"There is also the notable export accomplishments of non-electronic value-added companies," Payumo added.

Based on a report from the One-Stop Export Documentation Center-Subic (OSEDC), Winstron Infocomm topped the list of exporters accounting for $152.5 million of total receipts from January to March.

The Taiwanese firm, a subsidiary of Acer Computers, makes laptop computers, mother boards and peripherals, fax machines, integrated circuits, microelectronic and software for the brands Acer, IBM and Hitachi.

Winstron has also tied up with Singapore-based Global Airfreight, a logistic support provider, in its bid to transform its factory in Subic into a global logistics hub.

OSEDC manager Noel Tuliao said Winstron had picked Subic Freeport as an alternative site for its production operations after it decided to transfer a large portion of its manufacturing operations in China to another location.

Tuliao said Winstron's exports in the first quarter represented 72 percent of total exports from Subic Freeport for the period.

Coming in second was electric machinery and appliances maker Sanyo Deiki with exports reaching $13.4 million. Omron Corp., maker of automated teller machine parts, was third at $10.7 million worth of exports.

Japanese wood processing firm Juken Sangyo (Philippines) ranked fourth, posting $6.7 million in products exported.

Payumo said non-electronic, value-added businesses that contributed to exports included those engaged in high-end garment making, jewelry designs and aircraft parts production.

The official also projected a higher export value in the next few years after the completion of the $215-million Subic Container Port project as part of its port modernization program.

He said the project was expected to transport the Subic Freeport into a world-class port facility that could compete with other international ports and cope with the fast-growing container cargo trading in the Asia-Pacific region. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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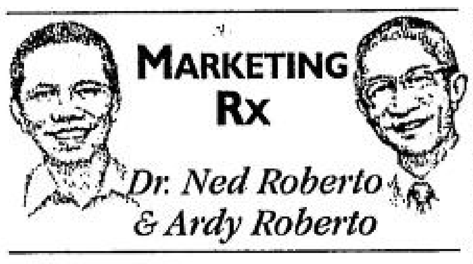
Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

# Napoleon Brandy case: Can bad publicity actually be good for your brand?



**MARKETING Rx**

*Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto*

WE'VE been wanting to give our two centavos worth on this issue, so we're glad that a reader e-mailed us this question:

"A recent controversy in the marketing world is AdBoard's ruling on the (distastefulness of the) "Kinse Años" ad. My friends in the advertising industry say that the negative publicity that Napoleon Brandy has been getting these days may actually help boost the brand's awareness. What does marketing research say is the true impact of negative publicity on a brand?"

A good starting point for diagnosing this case is to be clear about the meaning of "impact." In the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) literature, "impact" is a sequence of response stages that a consumer goes through when presented with an ad or any other communication piece. This sequence starts with the unawareness to awareness stage and ends with purchase to repeat purchase stage:

1) Unawareness
2) Awareness
3) Knowledge
4) Liking
5) Preference
6) Conviction
7) Purchase
8) Repeat Purchase.

## Sequence of consumer responses

Let's take Napoleon Brandy (let's call it N.B. for short from now on) as our case study. Think of the eight communication "hierarchy of effects" stages mentioned above as a partitioning of its target consumers' segment. In other words, research will tell you that there is a percentage of liquor drinkers who are (1) unaware, and a percentage who are already (2) aware but (3) don't know much about N.B. Then there's a percentage who (3) know, but (4) don't look favorably or have no liking as yet for N.B. Next, among the percentage who like N.B., (5) preference for it versus other brandy or other liquor brands is yet to develop. The percentage who prefer N.B. may not yet have the (6) conviction about buying it. Those who are in the percentage with conviction may not be ready yet, for one reason or another, to make the (7) purchase. And finally, those in the percentage who have bought may not be satisfied enough or may not have yet the occasion to (8) repeat the purchase.

## The 'tipping point'

An appropriately designed UAI (Usage, Attitude, Image) market survey will provide you with the relative population sizes and profile data of these eight hierarchy-of-effects segments. But even without these UAI data, we can logically diagnose which of these effect segments will be most affected by the negative publicity that N.B. received.

Those who are unaware of N.B. and who saw, heard or read about the Kinse Años news would certainly become aware. The content of this news and what they may or may not seek to know more about N.B. will determine quality of this awareness and the brand image they will form of N.B. This is the same set of factors that will shape the transition of those in the awareness stage into the stage of knowledge.

Those who are already in the knowledge stage may or may not be brought to the liking and preference stages by the Kinse Años "negative publicity." But that all depends on the personal source of that ignited their interest in the Kinse Años. Malcolm Gladwell, author of The Tipping Point, suggests that there are three such sources.

## Advocate

The first is the word-of-mouth "broadcaster" and an advocate who is someone with a natural persuasive power. If this advocate is negative about the Kinse Años and the consumer has faith in him, then the persuasion will most likely abort the knowledge stage. This advocate's persuasion will also likewise prevent the consumer from progressing to the liking and preference stages. This is the source that Fred "Make My Day" Lim and Boots Anson-Roa (who championed those offended by the N.B. ad) represent in the Kinse Años controversy.

However, there's an advocate source who is opposite the Lim/Roa type. He's an anti-establishment person and is positively predisposed toward the Kinse Años message. He is most likely to say to a knowledge-stage-based N.B. consumer that they ought to come to the rescue of N.B. "in the name of justice and freedom of expression." This advocate is typically represented by the drinking youth gang leader who is in a continuing search for a "cause" around which to rally his followers.

## 'Connector'

The audience reach of the advocate is relatively limited when compared to what the other type of word-of-mouth broadcaster who Gladwell calls "the connector." This personal source is someone who knows a whole lot of other people. He is a natural networker. He or she is like your friend or acquaintance who sends an e-mail to a long list of names on a burning issue of the day. Depending on whether this source is against or in favor of what the Kinse Años stands for, the knowledge-stage-based N.B. consumers he reaches will not or will go on to the next stages of liking and preference for N.B.

The advocate and the connector are word-of-mouth broadcasters who initiate the word-of-mouth process to others.

## 'Opinion leader'

The third type of personal source is different. This is the "opinion leader." Gladwell profiles this word-of-mouth source as someone who has the reputation of being knowledgeable about big and small things. This source does not initiate the diffusion of an opinion. Instead, he is sourced and approached by others. Respected newspaper columnists, popular preachers and well-known or wise teachers belong to this category. Again, depending on their stand for or against the Kinse Años issue, they can advance or impede Napoleon Brandy (N.B.) consumers in the knowledge stage to proceed to the next stages of liking and preference for N.B.

## High or low-involvement?

All three personal source types of word-of-mouth diffusion represent an external force of persuasion on the N.B. consumers. There is a force of persuasion that's internal to the consumer. This force is how the consumer regards N.B. or a liquor product as a high or a low involvement product. A strong indicator of involvement is what the consumer will do if, for instance, N.B. happens to be out-of-stock in the store he went to buy it. If this consumer immediately picks any other liquor brand, then this consumer has low involvement regard for N.B. A low involvement consumer will buy any brand that gets to his top-of-mind awareness. Because of low involvement, it's unlikely that a Kinse Años issue will exert a strong enough dissuasive factor in this purchase propensity.

On the other hand, if the consumer has high involvement regard for N.B. or a liquor product, this consumer will search his brand in another store if it happens to be unavailable in the store he went to. A high involvement consumer regards his brand as an expression of his personality. He buys it to make a statement about himself. So if this consumer sees the attack on Kinse Años as an attack on what N.B. stands for him, he will defend N.B. because an attack on N.B. is an attack on his personality.

As to those who are already in the Napoleon Brandy preference stage, it is doubtful that many of them could be persuaded NOT to go on to the convic-

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# Decades-old carnival place gives way to a supercenter

**By Margie Quimpo-Espino**

IT WAS a place everybody knew and everybody wanted to lease. But after months of negotiations, a relatively newcomer got the prime spot.

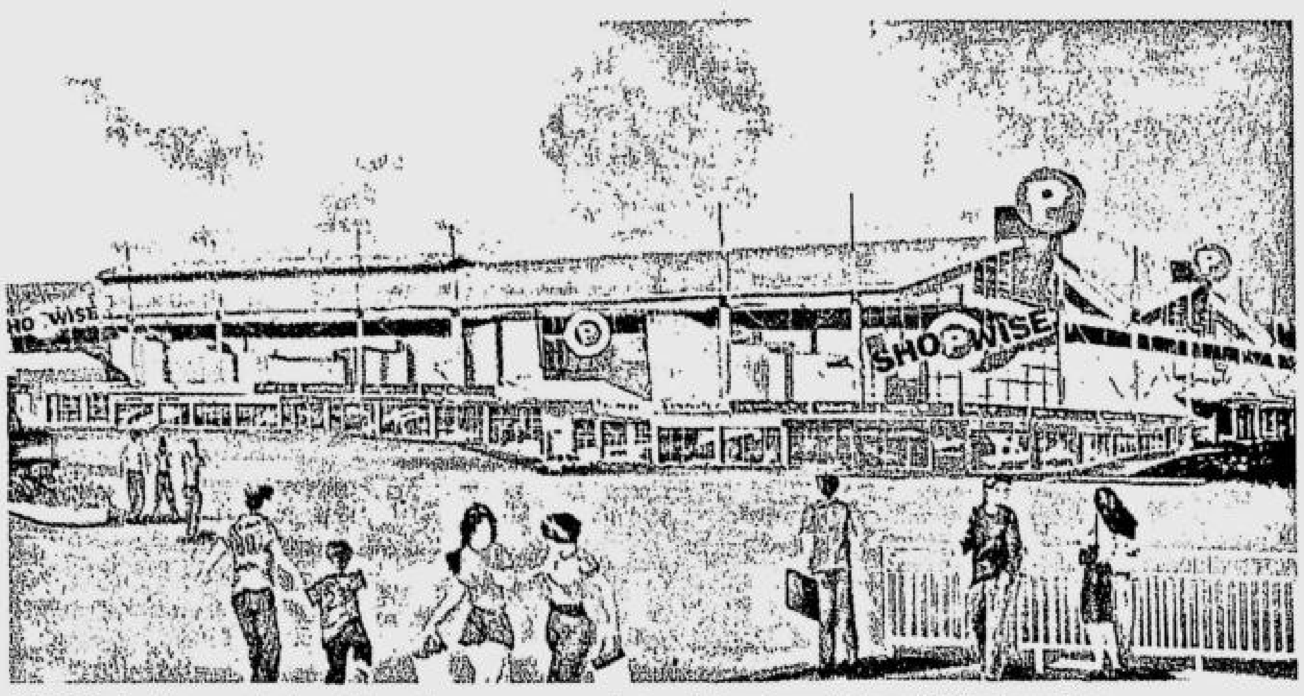
Shopwise is about to open its fourth supercenter at the old Fiesta Carnival in Cubao on May 5. Fiesta Carnival was the first amusement park in the country with rides and the famous Moonwalk which many families would frequent in the past.

"All major retailers wanted the space. But we came in as a group so it was given to us," explains Shopwise AVP for Marketing Frances J. Yu.

By group, she means the Rustan's group. Shopwise is partly owned by Rustan's Corp. And they are coming in strong in the new development of the Araneta Center.

Rustan's will be the anchor store in The Gateway, Araneta's high-end place.

The Araneta Center used to be the shopping district in the '60s but when other areas developed like the Makati Commercial Center, Ortigas, Quezon City and Alabang, Araneta lost its dominance and was relegated into a market for the lower-end.



**WHERE the rides used to be will now house a supermarket and departmentstore with fresh produce.**

But it is embarking on a multi-billion redevelopment.

One of the best location of the Center is the Fiesta Carnival because it is at the center of the commercial district. It is surrounded with roads and is very accessible because of a public transport system—a sure-fire formula for a supermarket.

Yu explains accessibility is very crucial to a supermarket because the tendency of the lower end market is to just buy their goods from the sari-sari stores. This saves them transport costs although they pay a higher price for the goods.

This is why in their Vito Cruz branch they have provided free tricycle service for a minimum purchase and in the Libis branch they are considering a jeepney service for their public transport riding consumers.

Shopwise is aware the former Festival Carnival is a prime location and expects the sales potential of the place to be bigger than its Festival Supermall branch in Alabang. Its fourth branch will have two floors with 562 parking spaces. So far this is their biggest investment at about P400 million.

Shopwise brought in the concept of hypermart or supercenter which means a department store, supermarket, and vast array of fresh produce rolled into one place. Other retailers quickly followed as the concept caught on among Filipinos. It was also the first to open its stores until late hours—up to 11 p.m.

Despite a weak economy, Yu says Shopwise posted an eight percent sales increase per store.

She pointed out that with the increase in unemployed, there has been a rise in sari-sari stores as people became entrepreneurial. The past months they experienced good sales because of of pre-election spending.

"Business is good. There's lot of money flowing. It's what happens after," she adds.

The fourth Shopwise will still have the shops and restaurants in the structure. But there will be several entrances to the supercenter.

Annual sales at the Araneta Center reach around P20 billion, showing there is still huge potential for growth.

The Gateway Mall is a P2-billion project that hopes to attract the cities of Quezon City, San Juan, Marikina, Pasig and Mandaluyong.

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## Napoleon ...

From page B2-1

tion and purchase stages by something like the Kinse Anos publicity. The negative publicity will most likely have no negative affect on the forward movement of those who already have conviction about N.B. (6th stage) to convert their conviction into purchase (7th stage) and repeat purchase (8th stage.)

So as consumers ascend the eight response stages, it gets more and more difficult to prevent their forward movement toward the last stages of purchase and repeat purchase. This is true until they find something very wrong with the brand in its delivery of its promised quality, and its image. It is these likely effects on brand image that we devoted our diagnosis.

What then is our marketing Rx for the N.B. brand manager and its sympathizers as well as its oppositionists? Our analysis and diagnosis lead to these prescriptions:

- If you look at communication "impact" as a sequence of effects on the target consumer that starts with unawareness and awareness and ends with purchase and repeat purchase, then the only clear and immediate impact of a "negative publicity" like the attack on Kinse Años is on an enlarged brand awareness. But the effects on the succeeding consumer response stages are less clear. You will need consumer understanding research to gain better insights and be more certain about your impact predictions.
- So in your consumer understanding research, first find out who are the advocates, the connectors and the opinion leaders in this controversy, and determine their position. If those who are negative about Kinse Años outnumber or "outvoice" those who are positive, then N.B. will experience a delay in the conversion of their consumers who are in the pre-purchase stage into the purchase and repeat purchase stages. If the opposite is true, that is, those who are positive outnumber those who are negative, N.B. will gain consumers who are more aware, knowledgeable, favorable, convinced, and who have more preference and purchase/repeat purchase interest for N.B. Therefore even more unlikely is preventing the forward movement of N.B. consumers toward the purchase and repeat purchase stages.
- Weigh this consumer insight against what you will find about consumer involvement for N.B. and liquor products. If consumer regard is one of low involvement, it's unlikely that a Kinse Años issue will exert a strong enough dissuasive factor in this consumer's purchase propensity for N.B. If the N.B. consumer is a high involvement consumer, and if this consumer sees the Kinse Años as an attack on what N.B. stands for him, he will defend N.B. because this attack on N.B. because he sees this as an attack on his own personality.

Lastly, on a personal note, we would prescribe to the Napoleon Brandy brand manager to get a "real" job so that you could sleep better at night.

*E-mail your questions or comments to MarketingRx@SaltandLightVentures.com. Or text us at 0919-314-5412.*

# Are campaign contributions taxable?

**TAX-FILES**

**By Antonette Tionko and Riza Pagtakhan**
*SGV & Co.*

UNDER the Omnibus Election Code of 1985, as amended by Republic Act (RA) No. 7166, each candidate for president or vice president is allowed to spend up to P10 for every registered voter. This translates to hundreds of millions of pesos in campaign expenditure.

Where do candidates get part of the money to spend on their campaign? From contributors.

Considering the staggering amounts, one wonders if campaign contributions are subject to tax.

Campaign contributors enjoy no tax benefit from their contributions. While the 1997 Philippine Tax Code allows certain contributions or donations to be deducted from the donor's gross income in computing income taxes, political contributions are not among those deductible contributions.

Under certain circumstances, contributions or donations may be subject to a donor's tax of 30 percent based on net gifts.

The Old Tax Code states "any contribution in cash or in kind to any candidate, political party or coalition of parties for campaign purposes, shall be governed by the Election Code, as amended."

Section 100 of the Omnibus Election Code of 1985, as amended by Section 13 of RA 7166, provides that "any provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding, any contribution in cash or in kind to any candidate or political party or coalition of parties for campaign purposes, duly reported to the commission shall not be subject to the payment of any gift tax."

A 1994 Court of Appeals case ruled on the taxability of campaign contributions without considering these provisions of the Election Code and the Tax Code.

In Commissioner of Internal Revenue vs Manuel Abello, the appellate court held that campaign contributions given to a political candidate, being voluntary transfers of property, are subject to donor's or gift tax.

A "gift" was defined as a voluntary transfer of property by one to another without any consideration or compensation.

The appellate court clarified that even if the contributions will be used as campaign funds, it does not affect the character of the contributions as donation or a gift. As long as the contributions are used for the intended purpose, the donee candidate has complete and absolute power to use it the way he sees fit.

To support its decision, the Court of Appeals cited BIR Ruling No. 344-88, dated July 20, 1988, wherein the BIR ruled that political contributions in the Philippines are considered taxable gifts rather than taxable income.

According to the BIR, a political contribution is bestowed only because of the contributor's personal affection or regard for the donee candidate, or general motives of philanthropy or charity. The purpose of the contributor is to give and to bolster the morals and the winning chances of the candidate and/or his political party.

The CA, however, took note of the fact that the US Federal gift tax law, from which the Philippine gift tax law was lifted, was amended on May 7, 1974, to exempt political contributions from the gift tax.

Moreover, in the 1981 case of Carson vs Commissioner, involving the taxability of political contributions made in 1971 and prior years, the US Federal Circuit Court ruled that campaign contributions, considering the purpose of the gift tax, are not simply "gifts" within the meaning of the gift tax law.

The appellate court maintained that the contributions are taxable gifts.

Quoting BIR Ruling No. 344-88, the appellate court declared that when the US gift tax law was adopted in the Philippines, the taxability of political contributions was an unsettled issue; hence, it cannot be presumed that the Philippine Congress then had intended to consider or treat political contributions as non-taxable gifts when it adopted the gift tax law.

Besides, the court continued, the Philippines need not necessarily adopt the present rule or construction in the US.

In conclusion, the CA held that in the absence of an expressly exempting provision of law, campaign contributions are subject to a donor's or gift tax in the Philippines.

The CA did not mention the express exemption of campaign contributions from the donor's or gift tax under the Omnibus Election Code.

The 1997 Tax Code adopted the 1977 Tax Code provision declaring that campaign contributions shall be governed by the Election Code.

An identical provision is found in the BIR RR No. 2-2003 which implements the 1997 Tax Code.

The Omnibus Election Code, which provides for exemption of reported campaign contributions from donor's or gift tax, remains applicable to this day.

It is a basic legal precept that where the law is clear, the first and fundamental duty of the courts is to apply the law. Interpretation by the court in such a case is not necessary.

The language of the Election Code is clear: "Campaign contributions duly reported to the Comelec shall be exempt from payment of donor's or gift tax."

Considering the present law and jurisprudence, the issue of taxability of campaign contributions remains unsettled.

Only a clarificatory BIR ruling or regulation, or a determination by the Supreme Court will resolve the matter.

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# Melt off ice drop, here come ice cream sticks

**MARKETING STRATEGY**

**By Margie Quimpo-Espino**

**CONCEPCION:** Management was faced with the need to reverse declining ice cream sales.

THE PROBLEM faced by RFM Corp., makers of market leader Selecta ice cream, was how do you make ice cream more available to the *masa* and increase sales?

"Our studies show that ice cream sales have been dropping by 2 to 3 percent the past two years. However ice cream sales in quick service restaurants (fast foods) in the forms of cones and sundaes were picking up," points out RFM chief Jose A. Concepcion III.

"Our management team decided we needed a game plan to address the situation. The question was what are we going to do," he says.

The answer was that people like ice cream but they want it "quick, convenient and *mura* (affordable)," he says. This is the same scheme used by most mass-based products—shampoo in sachets, cell phone load in smaller values, deodorant in tiny packaging.

For ice cream, the solution to selling it "tingi" came from a new and unique process from Unilever, RFM's partner in Selecta, that allows ice cream to stay on sticks.

Ice cream sticks were not possible as this could not be done before as only ice drop or products with high water content could be placed on sticks.

"Unilever developed it for ice cream purposes. In less developed countries, the cold chain is not as extensive. But this process keeps it longer. Anything on a stick has more water thus you only have the ice drop available on sticks. But with this process, you can put ice cream on a stick," Concepcion explains.

The process, RFM notes, has created a more convenient way to eat ice cream and at the same time widened the distribution base for the product. Its ice cream on a stick are available in supermarkets, as well as convenience stores and its ubiquitous ice cream carts.

The suggested retail price of the ice cream stick is only P10—a level which RFM hopes will increase ice cream demand.

And it has.

Selecta's marketing head Lee Esguerra says sales of the frozen novelty business have increased by double-digits since the launch of the sticks last March. Frozen novelty includes Cornetto, Selecta cups, Cones, Paddle Pop.

The increase in sales comes from a drop in the demand for frozen novelty from 2002 to 2003.

It is initially available in Selecta's five most popular flavors—Choco Peanut, which uses bits of the popular Chocnut candy in the ice cream, Cookies n' Cream, Very Rocky Road, Coffee Crumble and Quezo Real.

Esguerra says their sales in convenience stores have really shot up and they hope this will be boost their ice cream business needs to reverse the decline in sales.

Concepcion complains that when he wants an ice cream stick, he has to ask his driver to go to the factory to get as most of the time the stores have no stock.

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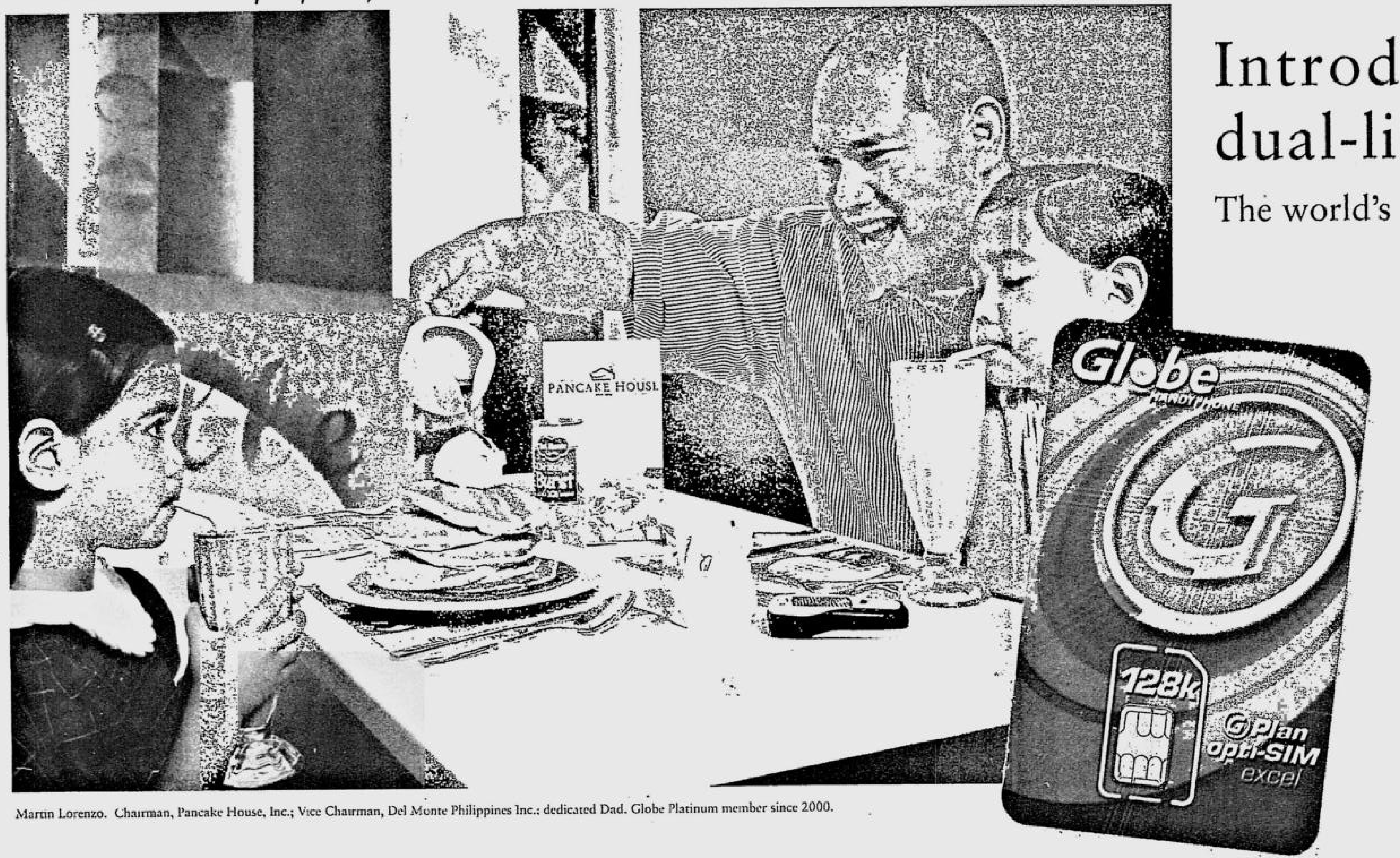

Martin Lorenzo. Chairman, Pancake House, Inc.; Vice Chairman, Del Monte Philippines Inc.; dedicated Dad. Globe Platinum member since 2000.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

MAYOR VI'S PROJECT

## Free home but ₱700 for a house number

**By Mei Magsino**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LIPA CITY—Urban poor residents living near this city's railways are puzzled why they have to pay P700 for their house numbers in the free housing project of actress and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto.

The residents said the house numbers are on a steel plate that normally costs P50 to P80 each. They said that they were also not issued an official receipt for the house numbers by the Urban Poor Affairs Division in the city hall, the office that is supposed to help the poor.

One of the beneficiaries of these free housing project is a housewife who claimed she had to borrow the money to pay for the house number from a loan shark.

The housewife is among the 1,000 residents who paid for their house numbers. She said the lack of an official receipt for the house number was a cause of embarrassment for her when she approached the loan shark.

"We were ordered to pay for the steel plates or these would not be released to us by the urban poor office," she said. "But up to now, we're still waiting for the receipt of our payment."

Her father, a longtime resident of the area, said his daughter was not supposed to pay for the house number. He said he and his wife got their house number free of charge.

"We were one of the first residents of Villa sa Riles. The first time the steel plates were released, we got ours for free," said the resident. "That's why I was so confused when my daughter told me that she had paid."

He said there were more than 1,000 residents like his daughter who paid the fee, in exchange for the plates that would identify the residents of the "*home along the riles*" as beneficiaries of the Villa sa Riles (VSR) project.

VSR are also Mayor Vi's initials.

"How much is P700 paid by about 1,000 households? That's really big for a project with no receipts," the resident pointed out.

### Unaware

But Mayor Vi seems to be unaware of the residents' payments.

"Ronel del Rio is the head of the urban poor department," she said. "He knows about the project too well. But whatever it is they're doing, I think they are coordinating with the Philippine National Railways and processing the papers so that the residents near the railways could own the land where their houses stand."

The house number of the beneficiaries are on the steel plates. These would entitle the residents to be listed as beneficiaries of the Isang Galaw Mula Bugtong Hanggang Pangao project, a housing project that spans 10 barangay units or 31.8 kilometer line of the former railways that is now filled with houses.

Andre Habig, a community leader who collected the money from the residents, said he remitted P21,000 and P30,000 on two separate occasions to the office of the urban poor at the city hall.

"But when I asked for a receipt, I was just given a list to sign my name," Habig said. "I was told by the office's head, Ronel del Rio, that the money will be used to pay for the maps where the new houses with new plates would be added."

Habig admitted that some of the residents have not yet paid.

"We're not rich. We live near the railways because we are very poor. P700 is too much for us," Habig said.

### Blind aide

Asked why there was no official receipt issued to the beneficiaries, Del Rio, Mayor Vi's appointed executive assistant and the one who handles the urban poor office, claimed the office had issued receipts.

"*Ipakita mo sa akin ang nagsasabing wala silang tinanggap na resibo at susuntukin ko* (Show me the one who claims that he didn't get a receipt and I will punch him)!" he said.

Del Rio claimed to be Mayor Vi's blind aide, but when this writer visited the G.V. FM radio booth where he holds his morning radio program, he was seen reading text messages on his cellular phone and airing it over the radio.

### Non-government

Del Rio said the first batch of beneficiaries, totaling 1,699, was really given free plates in 2001. But the second batch, about 150, was really asked to pay P700 each for the plate.

He stressed that the second batch of residents was not supposed to be included in the project, but since the barangay captains requested for their inclusion, they had no

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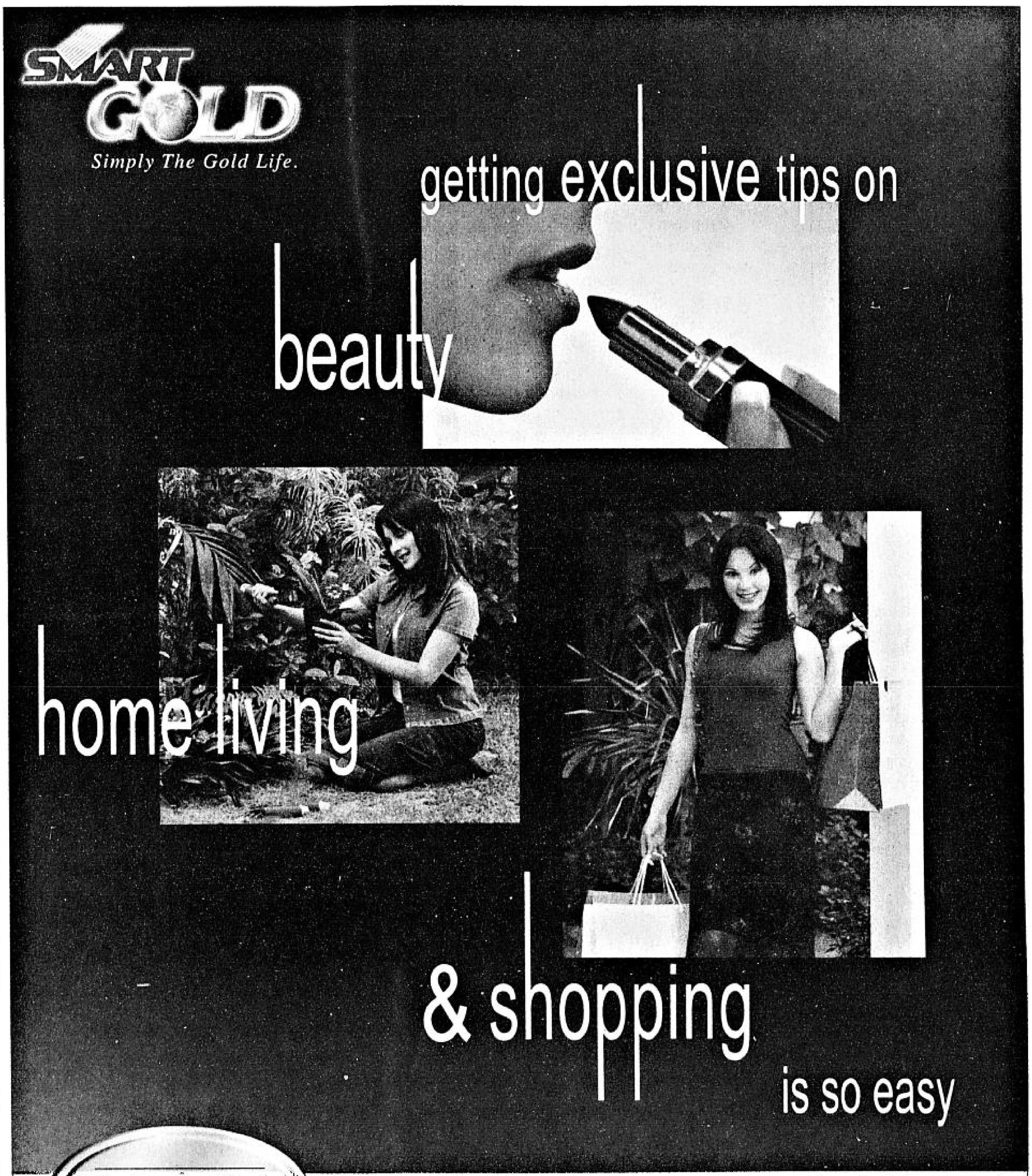

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Editor Louie C. Camino
E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

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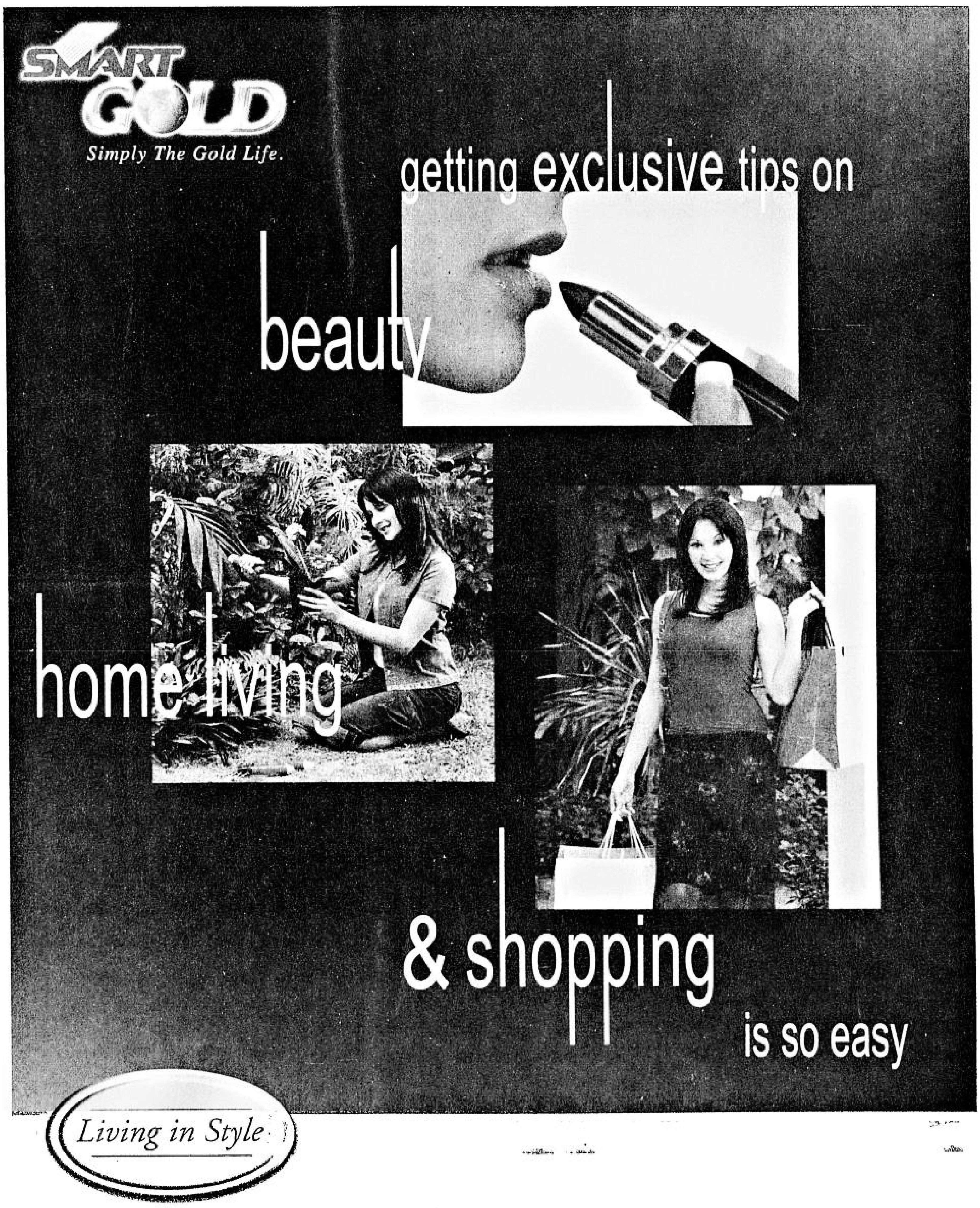

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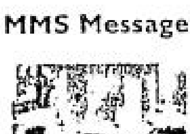
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3 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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9 TAKING LIVES
10 ACACIA

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6 PASSION OF THE CHRIST

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3 BOOBITA ROSE
4 SCOOBY DOO 2

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1
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11:30 FS/12:00 MF/2:25/
4:50L/7:15/9:10/ 9:10
LFS/ 9:40 LMF/
11:35 END

2
THE PASSION
OF THE CHRIST
10:50 FS/11:20 MF/
2:00/4:40/ 7:20/ 9:30 LFS/
10:00 LMF/12:10 END

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4 PETER PAN 10:15, 12 30, 2 50, 5 10, 7 30, 9.45
5 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 10 35, 12 50, 3.05, 5 20, 7 35, 9 50
6 TAKING LIVES 10 30, 12 50, 3 05, 6 20, 7 35, 9.50
7 50 FIRST DATES 11:55, 2.05, 4 15, 6 25, 8 35, 10:30
8 ACACIA 11.00, 1 10, 3 20, 5 30, 7:40, 9.50
9 TWISTED 10 50, 1 00, 3 10, 5 20, 7 30, 9 40
10 THE UNINVITED 11 00, 1 40, 4.20, 7 00, 9.45

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2 THE UNINVITED 10:10, 12 35, 3 00, 5 20, 7 40, 10:00
3 TAKING LIVES 10.10, 12 25, 2 40, 4 55, 7 10, 9 40
4 TWISTED 11.00, 1 10, 3 20, 5 30, 7 40, 9 50
5 PETER PAN 11 30, 2 00, 4 30, 7 00, 9.40
6 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 11 00, 1 10, 3 20, 5 30, 7 40, 9 50
7 PAYCHECK 10 35, 12 50, 3 05, 5.20, 7.35, 9.50

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1 TWISTED 10 50, 12:50, 2:50, 4 50, 6 50, 9 00
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3 THE UNINVITED 11:40, 2 00, 4 20, 6 40, 9 00
4 PETER PAN 10.25, 1 05, 3 15, 6.25, 8.05
5 TAKING LIVES 12 05, 2 15, 4 25, 6 40, 9.00
6 ACACIA 11.00, 1 00, 3 00, 5 00, 7 00, 9:00
7 PAYCHECK 10 25, 1 05, 3 45, 6 25, 9 05
8 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 10 40, 2 15, 4 50, 7 25, 10 00

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1 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST 12 20, 3 00, 5 40, 8 30
2 TWISTED 12:00, 2 00, 4 00, 6 00, 8 10
3 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB 11 45, 1:55, 4 05, 6 15, 8 30
4 TAKING LIVES 11 45, 1 55, 4 05, 6 15, 8 30
5 PAYCHECK 11 20, 1 35, 3 50, 6 05, 8 30
6 ACACIA 11 25, 1.15, 3 05, 4 55, 6 45, 8 35
7 THE UNINVITED 10 20, 12 45, 3 10, 5 35, 8 10
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2 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 MASIKIP SA DIBDIB
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# GMA moved to tears by film

LIKE most movie fans, President Macapagal-Arroyo shed tears when she watched Mel Gibson's controversial hit movie "The Passion of the Christ," which starred Jim Caviezel.

Ms Macapagal saw the movie at a mall during her Holy Week retreat in Baguio City.

She said that after watching the film, which depicted the final 12 hours of Jesus Christ, her retreat masters reenacted the Last Supper "by having our own Passover meal with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, fruits and vegetables."

Describing the movie as "wonderful," the President also recalled how she did nothing but watch movies while she was growing up in Iligan.

When her father was a young congressman in Manila, "he used to bring me and my mother to the Times Theater in Quiapo for a double feature," Ms Macapagal said.

"So you see, I grew up with the movies. I know how important movies are to the ordinary Filipino. We are fond of movies, fond of movie stars," she said.

Although she is seen watching movies during regular run in theater malls, the President and her daughter, Luli, also attend screenings at the preview room of Viva Films.

# Mayor …

From page C1

choice but to give in.

"The payment wasn't even enough to cover the mapping, the price of the plates, and our miscellaneous expenses. The city government has no more budget," Del Rio said, "The second batch of residents is not really in the urban poor category because they are professional squatters who live near the railways simply because they can't pay the rent for an apartment."

He said the estimated amount of money collected from the residents is about P28,000 only. This year, the annual budget of Lipa City is about P450 million.

Del Rio said his office has never received any complaints about the payment for the steel plates until now.

Asked if the Commission on Audit has audited the beneficiaries' payments and the urban poor office's expenses, Del Rio said the project is "not subject to any audit by the COA because it's a private project, not the government's."

But he stressed that his office had been coordinating with PNR general manager Jose Sarasola, who was supposed to have given his office the authority to "give" the land in excess of the 10-meter-area buffer zone of the railway to qualified beneficiaries.

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# 'Three for the Road' pays tribute to music legends

By **Joven S. Joya**
*Contributor*

**SHOW STOPPER**

WHEN Mon David sings "All My Tomorrows," he gives the impression that he's always singing it for the first time, and only for you. Why, this enduring artist even seems to be whispering the low notes to your ear, underscoring a clarity of voice that is one of his trademarks.

The Tony Bennet song, says David, is one of his personal favorites and has been a permanent fixture in his repertoire. It reminds him as well of a huge fan, a highly-placed, middle-aged man, who follows him to all his concerts only to hear him sing that. "He would leave as soon as I had sung the song, so now I make it a point, whenever he is around, to sing it last."

David gets to sing more of Bennet's enduring music as he stars with Richard Merk and Robert Seña in "Three for the Road: A Tribute to Davis Jr., Bennet and Sinatra," a concert that Merk's Bar Bistro (on the third level of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City) is staging on April 22 and 29 and May 6 and 13.

Merk will do Sinatra. Seña, of "Miss Saigon" fame, will revive Sammy Davis' equally immortal music.

All three seasoned performers recently treated media people to a sample of what the show will dish out, and what a rich, appetizing sample it turned out to be.

As impressive as David was with his version of "All My Tomorrows," Merk mesmerized with "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" and left the small audience clamoring for more.

## Priceless lessons

With his rendition of "What Kind of Fool Am I," Seña, having rushed from a play rehearsal in Quezon City, showed why he rose from the ranks of "Miss Saigon"—from ensemble member to playing the plum, pivotal role of The Engineer.

Seña considers the voice lessons and confidence he got from his long-running stint with the London-originated musicale as priceless. This was beside the pay he earned from it, which he describes as worth all the effort. "I guess I can face any type of crowd now without any shade of fear or nervousness, thanks to my Miss Saigon exposure," he said.

MON David, Richard Merk and Robert Seña

Seña started his career in music when he joined the rock bands Retro and Modern Times, after which he ventured into theater and did "Joseph The Dreamer," "Katy," "Mga Anghel sa Lupa," and "Magsimula Ka."

In 1989, he passed the audition for "Miss Saigon" and his many years in the production, he explained, allowed him time to study theater and prosthetic makeup at Greasepaint and voice under the famous teacher Mary Hammond. He went on to do "Miss Saigon" in Stuttgart, Germany, and "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Hey Mr. Producer" in London.

Back in Manila for good, Seña again earned rave reviews for his performances in "Rama at Sita," "Miong," "Etiquette for Mistresses," "One for the Soul," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Bayan Isang Paa na Lamang," "Spoliarium-Juan Luna," and, more recently, the hit comedy show "Electile Dysfunction."

Seña, the 2003 Tinig awardee in the classical/musical singer category, is working on his third album, doing lounge and corporate shows with wife Isay Alvarez, another "Miss Saigon" alumna, and guesting on TV.

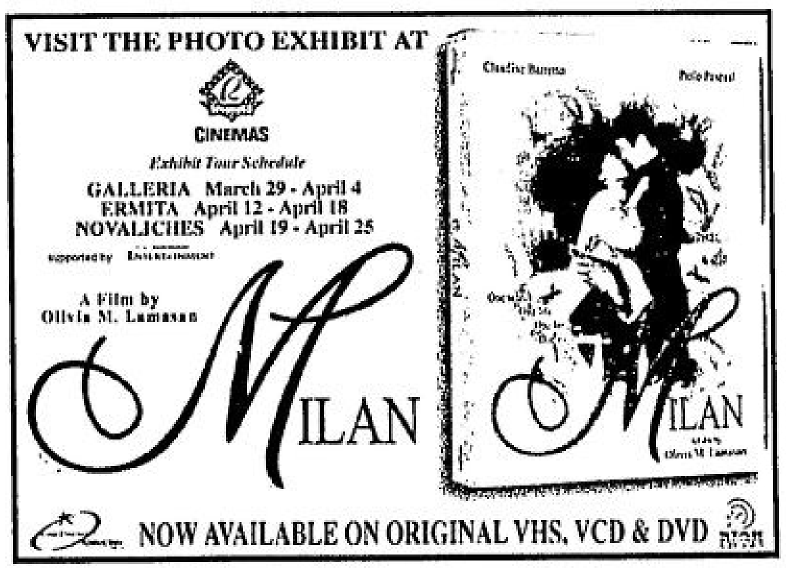
## Reintroducing them

Unlike Seña, David and Merk had had the opportunity of watching at least one of the legendary American singers perform live. Merk saw Bennet sing in a concert with Davis Jr. in Atlantic City two and a half years ago, and much, much earlier, had seen Sinatra do a show at the Folk Arts Theater. David had also caught Sinatra in that Manila concert.

Ever a true musician, Merk said he's touched by the effort of Bennet's son Danny to reintroduce his father's music to the pop crowd. Merk says he's doing just that locally.

The idea to stage "Three for the Road," he said, came after Merk's Bar Bistro started revisiting the musical era represented by the three legends with the recent smash-hit performance of The Dynasouls, popularly known as the Beatles of the Philippines. Due to public clamor, Merk's is bringing back The Dynasouls with more Beatles music on April 15 and 27.

Good music, Merk remembered to add, is not the only specialty that his music bar serves up. "We also offer fine country cuisine from the respected kitchens of the famed Bistro Remedios," said the true-blue durable jazz artist, and true-blue businessman.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# Versatility is the name of 'American idol's' game

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

IF text messages from the States are to be believed, the two Fil-Ams in the "American Idol" finals are having a rough time of it, with **Camile Velasco** bowing out of the show. Is there still time for **Jasmine Trias** to get her competitive act together, and can Fil-Ams in the States mount a determined text-note campaign to keep her in the race?

If it's any consolation, it isn't just Camile Velasco and Jasmine Trias who have been getting the heebie-jeebies of late. Many of the other finalists have been having a tough time, now that the singing competition has been requiring them to go from one musical genre to another.

This has forced them to give up the "comfort zone" of the singing style that they have been most at home with all these years. There have been some pleasant surprises as a few finalists show that they can do well in different genres, but most of the young singers have found themselves out of their depth.

Well, if versatility is now the name of the "American idol" game, the finalists will just have to put up—or drop out.

Why has the show been sequentially raising the stakes for its finalists? Because the US performing scene is terribly competitive, and only the truly gifted and versatile enjoy long-term careers.

It *is* a bit cruel for the program to put its young contestants through the wringer like this, but a show that is viewed by 30 million people and commands 18 million text votes a week is clearly a high-stakes game that only the truly gifted and determined talents can win.

## Feedback

THANKS to Ms **Bernadette Cortez** of Angeles, Pampanga for her valuable suggestions, some of which we are excerpting here, for other readers and entertainment buffs to benefit from.

For starters, Ms Cortez compliments PDI for its "efforts to improve and staying impervious to the tantrums of assorted *pikons*. But it is the art, music, film and book articles (skip the 'aren't we rich and beautiful' society pages) that have carried me through many a soul-drought.

"Thank you for your insightful and fluidly-written column and features. You push your readers to go check their dictionary lest their brains rot...

"In 1995, I became an accidental film buff: I stumbled upon Barry Norman's '100 Best Films of the Century." It was a timely discovery, because 1995 was the centennial of filmmaking. As a result of that serendipitous find, I was able to catch some of the films mentioned in the book on TV, and my movie sensibilities went from latest-Hollywood to the Shangri-La of world cinema.

"I wish others could savor this experience, too. It's easy: the cable channels are there, the movies are playing there, so many people have 'unmined' gold in their own backyards.

"Unless the film just has to be seen on the wide screen, I can wait for it a year or so on cable. My exception to this role is watching quality Pinoy movies upon release, in support of their makers' brave efforts.

"About five years ago, I had to repress a joyous shriek when I found another valuable book, 'The Movie Guide' (Cinebooks, published by The Berkeley Publishing Group, New York), with its staggering list of the best films ever produced all over the world. It also includes in-depth reviews, award information and off-cam trivia.

"I have since acquired other praiseworthy books-'The Movie Mom's Guide to Family Movies' (1999, Avon Books, New York) and 'Leonard Matlin's Movie and Video Guide,' Signet, New York), with its mind-boggling list of global film titles. (It rates our Kidlat Tahimik's 'The Perfumed Nightmare' a high 3 1/2 stars.)

"In our home, cable is not only television, it's a film festival every day. This is what we do: when our film sked magazine is delivered, I jot down on a 'film calendar' in my file fax all the titles to be shown which appear in my Matlin book. I then record them on VHS tapes (E-180 accommodates three two-hour films on SLP).

"My husband and I watch 30-minute installments of the films at mealtimes, or hold seven-hour mad marathons on Sundays. Our goal is three movies a week, after which we discuss the pictures, then read the reviews.

"Would you be able to provide a similar guide for your section's readers? It would be such a great service for viewers who have access to cable. The better films on TV for each month can be ranked according to excellence, so readers would be informed in advance about the movies truly worth seeing. How about it?" *(To be concluded.)*

# Big Bernie's back in the biz

BERNIE Uy, with her pleasant plumpness and her singing, can dream of becoming another Nanette Inventor.

This one-woman vaudeville act has 25 years of professional singing behind her, starting with the Zee band, where Chad Borja also came from. The Zee band took Bernie to top venues in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Europe.

With wit and humor, Bernie can impersonate a hip-jerking Elvis Presley, Tina Turner and Dionne Warwick with ease. The 205-pound Bernie (she wants to trim down to 160 lbs, though) can shift from mellow to rough, Broadway to soul.

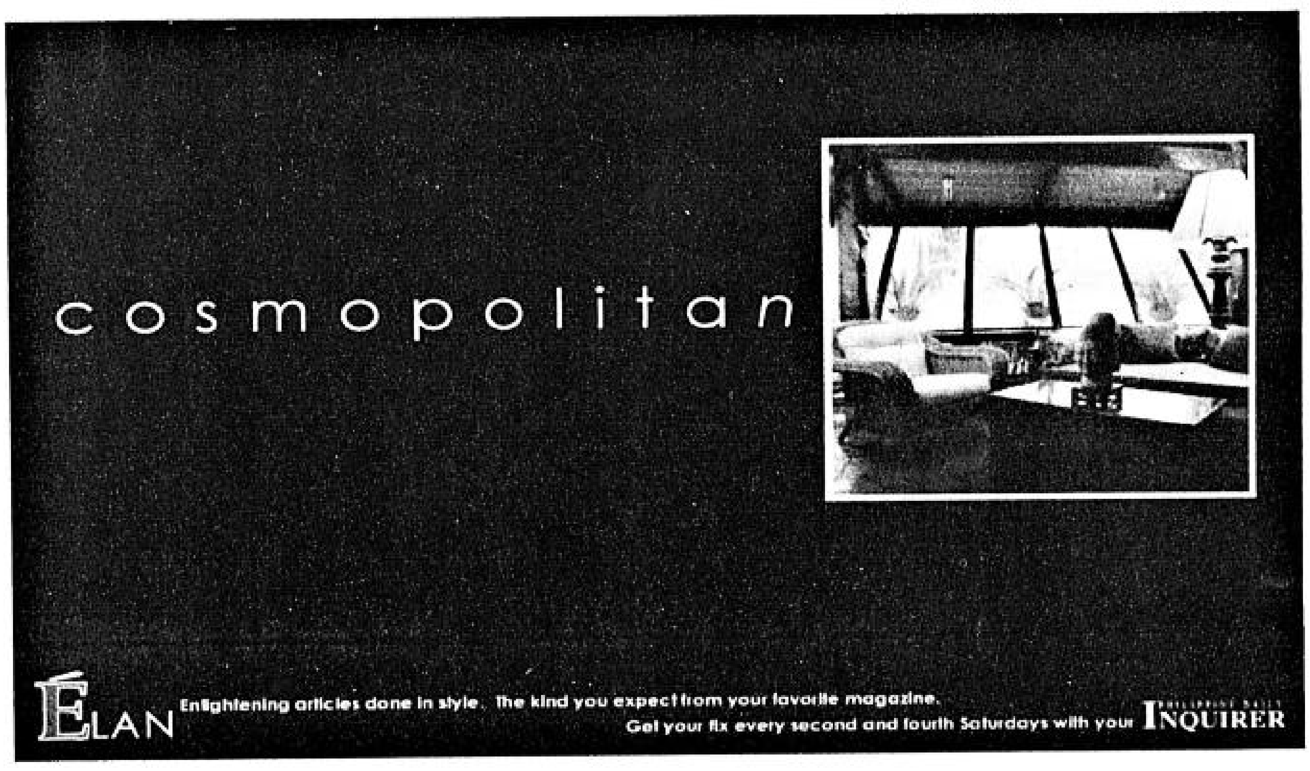
Primeline Inc.'s Ronnie Henares discovered Bernie when she directed a show at Merk's Bar for her friend Ladine Roxas. Impressed by her talent, Ronnie persuaded Bernie to return to singing after being sidetracked for four years.

BERNIE UY

"I believe that you don't have to put people down on stage when you perform," says Bernie. "I want to buck the trend by creating a positive atmosphere on stage. It's better to praise somebody than put them down, and still be entertaining. That's why I believe my return to the business has a divine purpose."

Bernie performed at the Library in Malate last night and will be back on May 5.

Welcome back Bernie.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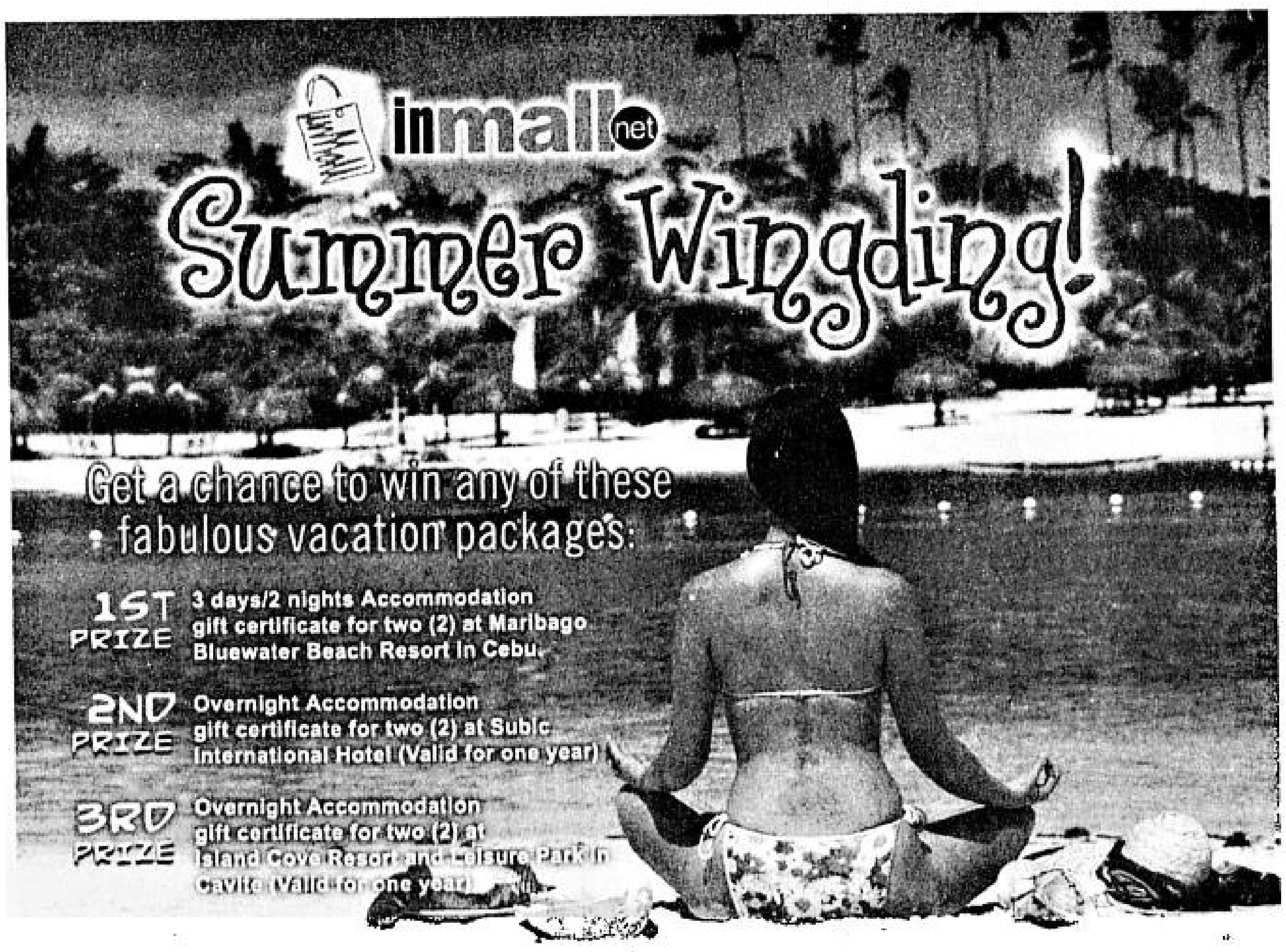
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WEDNESDAY **2BU** • THURSDAY **FOOD** • FRIDAY **FASHION/BEAUTY/HOME** • SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

SEASONED fashion designer Inno Sotto prefers 'em vintage and faded.

# Denim denizens

## Inno Sotto leads lifestyle movers and shakers in paying tribute to Levi's 501

**By Alex Y. Vergara**

INNO Sotto's fascination with blue jeans dates back to his days as a young fashion design student in the United States. Years before the advent of pre-washed jeans, he used to scour the flea markets of Los Angeles and San Francisco in search of a vintage pair or two. His brand and style of choice: Levi's 501.

Apart from their classic appearance, 501 jeans were Sotto's choice because of their snug fit and soft texture. The designer puts premium on comfort more than anything else.

"Unless I really have to dress up," he says, "I prefer wearing jeans,.particularly a week-old worn pair of *maong* because it's more comfortable."

There was a time when the seasoned designer used to own three pairs of vintage Levi's in several styles. But he eventually gave them away to his nephews since he could no longer fit into them.

"That was so many light years ago," he says with a chuckle. "Back then, Levi's was probably the only brand in the market."

But Sotto's love for blue jeans, particularly a pair of Levi's 501, hasn't waned through the years. In fact, it has become stronger. He still wears them today with aplomb, if not with conviction.

A journalist, for instance, once asked the fashion designer in an interview what piece of clothing he wished he had thought of designing first. His unequivocal response was a pair of Levi's jeans. Tough luck. The San Francisco-based family-owned company beat him to it by 150 years.

"Aside from a pair of Levi's," he recalls himself saying in the interview, "I don't know any other type of garment that has been accepted universally for such a long, long time. Deep inside, that's probably what every designer yearns to achieve. Long after they're gone, they want to leave something behind that's been truly accepted by everybody."

That was years before folks at Levi's deemed Sotto and several other personalities such as Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Bea Valdes, Bea Zobel Jr., Gaita Fores, Mandy de la Rama-Santos, Tricia Panlilio-Cu-Unjieng, Kate Torralba, Ronald Pasion and Tim Yap as "style" icons.

### Singled out

They were singled out for being "movers and shakers who have shaped the identity of local style." Much like a pair of Levi's jeans, these people are said to have attained "iconic" status for the character, individuality and influence they wield beyond fashion and their respective fields.

As such, they have each been asked to inject their respective personalities and sense of style into a pair of Levi's 501. Sotto, for instance, is working on a black pair by embellishing it with a combination of plastic and leather.

Indeed, it would be interesting to see their individual takes on a classic piece of clothing. The spruced-up 501s will be on display starting Tuesday at the Levi's Power Plant Mall outlet.

Of course, this isn't the first time Sotto is lending his long-haired presence to a brand. Years ago, he appeared in a Swatch commercial with several other celebrities. Since then, he has had to turn down several offers to endorse a gamut of products (including a powdered detergent "gentle" enough for his couture collection—hello, haven't they heard of dry cleaning?) until this invitation from Levi's came along.

What do the two brands have in common?

"I like them both," he says. "Back when I

DENIM/ D2

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**Well-heeled glam**

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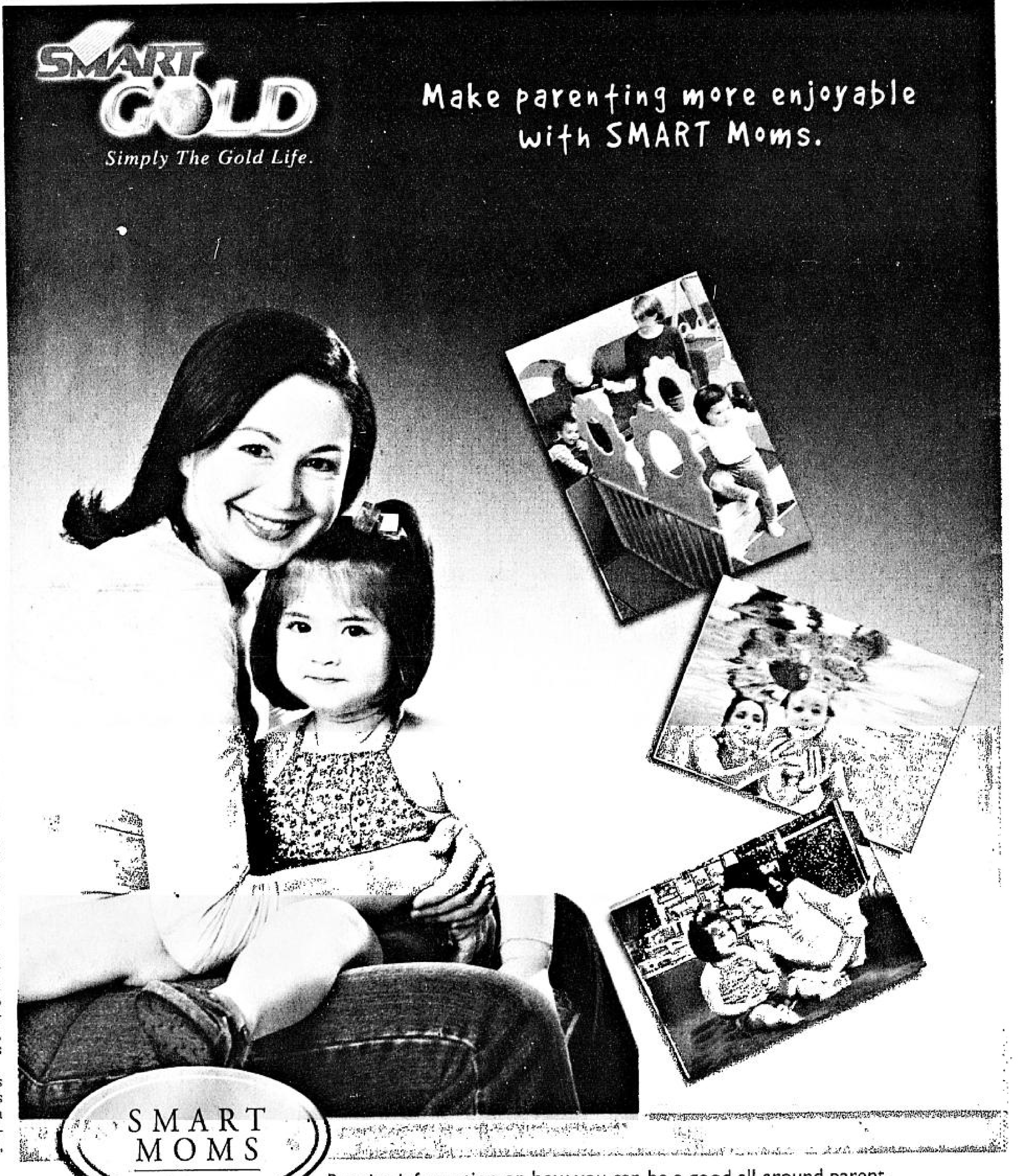

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# Denim denizens

From page D1

was studying, I really wore a Swatch because that was probably the only watch I could afford then."

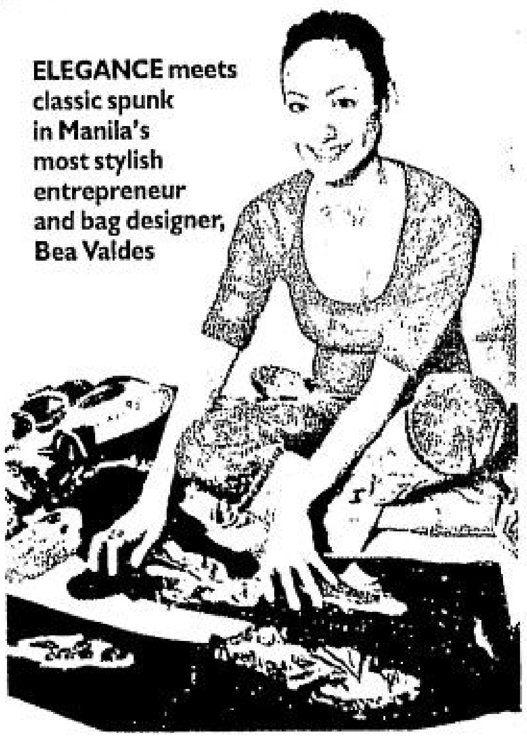
And what has denim got to do with couture? Nothing much, admittedly. Still, Sotto doesn't mind if people fail to see the connection between the two. He isn't about to lose sleep over it, as he has already acknowledged denim's place in high fashion and pop culture. Being so-called hip, however, is farthest from his mind.

"I have yet to start thinking in that direction," he says. "I don't think the next client won't go to me because I'm now identified with a brand of jeans and what have you. Nor is this a move to appeal to younger clients. Their decision to hire me will probably be based on other works that I've done."

Quality, as the classic Levi's tagline goes, never goes out of style.

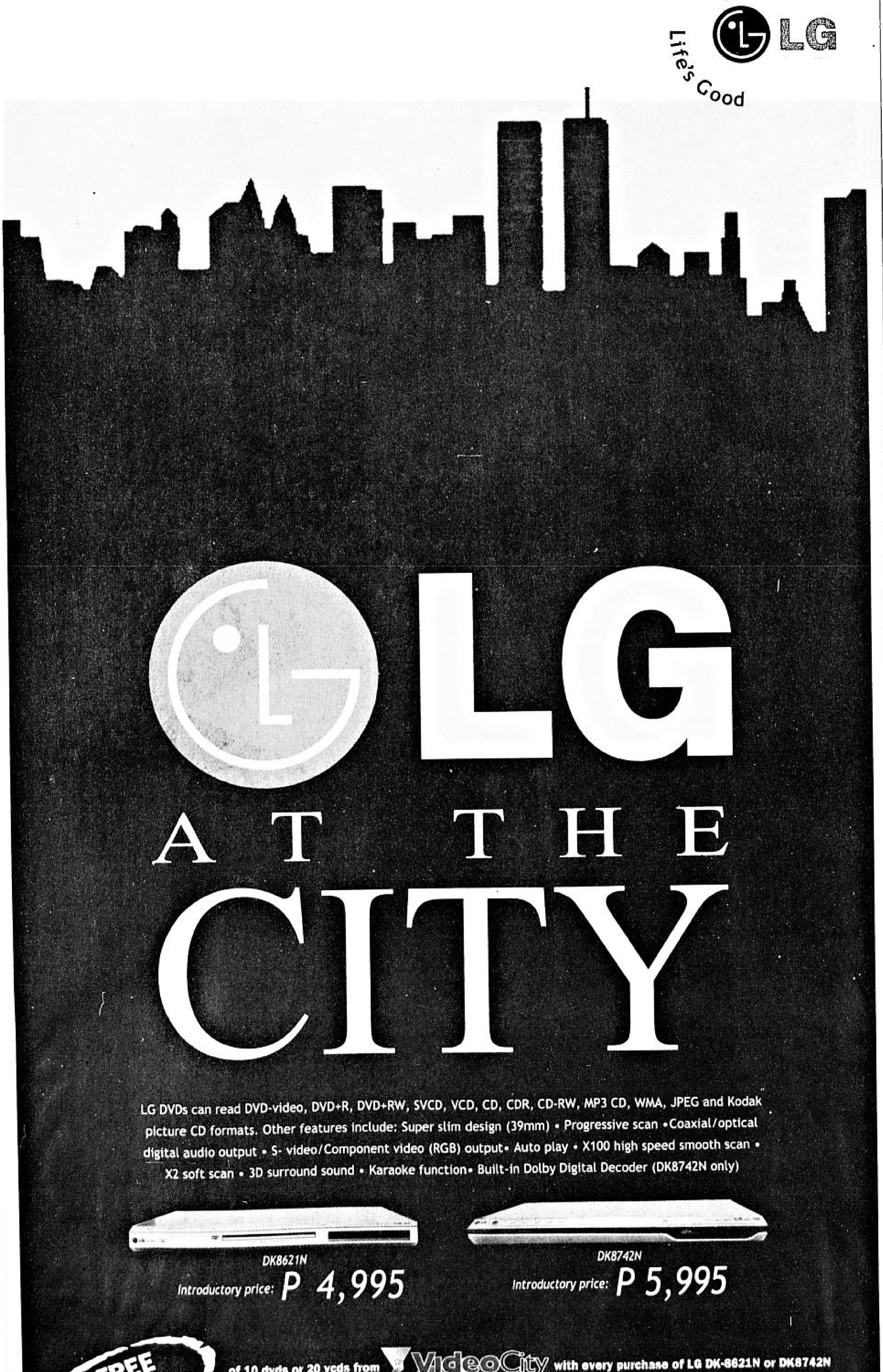
*E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph*

**EVENTOLOGIST** Tim Yap goes beyond the conventional mode of wearing his Levi's 501.



**ELEGANCE** meets classic spunk in Manila's most stylish entrepreneur and bag designer, Bea Valdes

**STYLE** icon Tessa Prieto-Valdes in an African and tribal-inspired interpretation of her Levi's 501



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The new generation Art Cool Air conditioners will surely make you feel comfortable in style. These are not only the products that will set you beyond your imagination. Another category is the Digital Display & Media product lines which are composed of consumer electronics like Color Television: Conventional, Flat TV, Projection TV and Plasma Display Panel, Audio/Video Products: DVD Players, DVD Home Cinema, DVD Components and even wireless home cinema system.

Other featured products were the LG Lafinion, the ultimate flat colored TV and the Wireless Home Cinema, the cutting edge for the audio-video technology. LG Electronics also boasts of its projection television with multiple "picture in picture" (PIP) windows that allows the viewer to watch a program and view 12 different channels simultaneously. Other products showcased during the convention were Mobile Phone Handsets to open the mind with the high technology they bring. With unceasing product innovations, LG Electronics has a myriad of quality product line-ups to satisfy the different needs of individual consumers at a surprisingly low cost.

One of the highlights of the convention was the awarding/recognition of LGs valued dealers for their achievements during the year 2003 plus the entertainment from Ms. Marissa Sanchez and a "mini-concert" Ms. Lani Misalucha.

Established in Korea in 1958, LG Electronics steadily grows as a major force in the consumer electronics market, covering 76 subsidiaries and marketing units on a global scale. Through continuous research and development, LG Electronics constantly pioneers product advancements in three core sectors of the electronics industry: Digital Display & Media, Digital Appliance, and Telecommunications Equipment and Handsets.

For more information, please log on to www.lge.com or call LG's Customer Information Center at 640-2525.

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Summer exposes the toes and hands to much damage

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**ESSIE** Precious Pink

# Pampered hands and feet

**MAKEOVER 911**

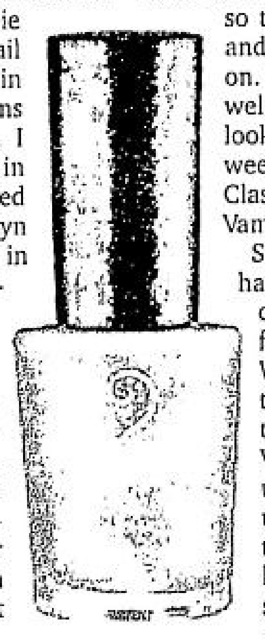
*Kinny Salas*

IT IS SANDALS season, and those of us who have neglected our toes during the closed-shoes, cold months are stressing them now. I have several favorite places that specialize in treating stressed toes. Toe nails, dear people, have to be squared off, not pointed or rounded because these may lead to ingrown toe nails.

California Nails and Day spa (cash payment only)—highly recommended for the most glamorous and perfect fingernails around. They can fix ugly toe nails via nail extensions for that perfect square, good for special occasions or as long as open-toed sandals are en vogue.

Want some finger- or toenail art? Miss Fanny is the one to seek as her customers range from little girls to adults. Ms Connie and Ms Percy are the nail techies that specialize in acrylic nails, extensions and ingrown removal. I have seen Miss Connie in action, with very satisfied customers. Ms Pholyn and Ms Ann specialize in hand and foot reflexology.

Nail Spa (they accept credit cards)—No extensions here, but hand and foot masks and reflexology massages for the stressed and weary are winners. They pamper your extremities which end up silky if not smoother. Nail Spa deals with ingrown toe nails and will also guide you patiently in growing back your pointed or rounded toe nails to square off. I love the Essie spa manicure (P550) by Ms Pretty where she soaked, scrubbed, applied a masque, massaged, cleaned and polish with Essie nail polish.



**AWAKE** Desert Rose

My color was Future's French, much better suited to yellow skin tones than the famous Essie Ballet Slipper. For my feet, which I abused with four-inch stilettos the night before, I opted for the Bliss Feet (P990) with Ms Malou, who soaked my throbbing feet in minty bubble bliss, scrubbed it with minty exfoliating cream with pumice, coated in a masque, rinsed then treated with a reflexology massage and cleaned. I opted for no polish because I loved the natural pink glow of my nails after the massage.

Great nail polish: Essie (P425), undoubtedly the most popular of its kind, is now available at Rustan's Essenses. Who has not heard of Essie's Ballet Slipper? I find it too pale for most Asian skin tones, though, so I encourage you guys to try out the following shades for the pale nude nails that's all the rage: Mademoiselle, Precious Pink, Future's French and Sold Out Show. There are so many choices my head is spinning.

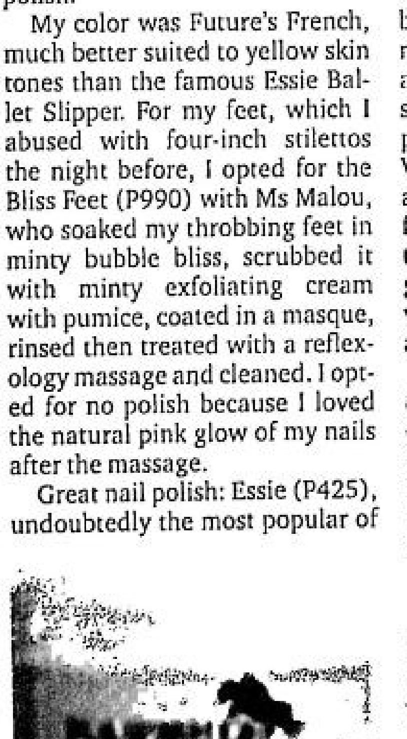
Awake (P525), my all-time favorite, is Rosewater, a sheer berry wash of color that camouflages yellow nails or gives nails that healthy pink look.

Shiseido and Chanel: Both are very pricey, but if nails are your fetish, they are so worth it! They do not chip, and anyone who applies them can easily get the professional finish. They coat thinly so they won't get sloppy and can easily be layered on. Glossy finish lasts as well. No chipping and looks good as new for two weeks. I love Shiseido's Classic Red and Chanel's Vamp and Orient.

Strong nails: Barielle hand and foot nail cream is a brand made for horses' hooves. Women discovered though that it made their nails stronger. Voila, a beauty product was born. It is still used for horses, but in the tradition not unlike Mane n' Tail shampoo. It has also become an in demand product for women. Check out the website at www.barielle.com.

Dermalogica Hand and Nail treatment SPF 15—Hands show age the quickest because we take them for granted. Even when we wear long sleeves our hands will still get sun exposure. We wash them most often, too, so any sunblock disappears. This intense, non-greasy treatment protects and repairs chapped hands while strengthening the nails against peeling and splitting. It contains Vitamin C and licorice to reduce any hyperpigmentation such as freckles and age spots. Other antioxidants like gingko biloba, grape seed and Vitamin E help reverse the damage and guards against further damage.

Call Nail Spa Makati: 8173128; Shangri-La Edsa: 6874991; Essenses Rustan's: 8133739 local 205. California Nails and Day Spa at 8132927, with branches at Greenhills, Alabang and Magallanes.



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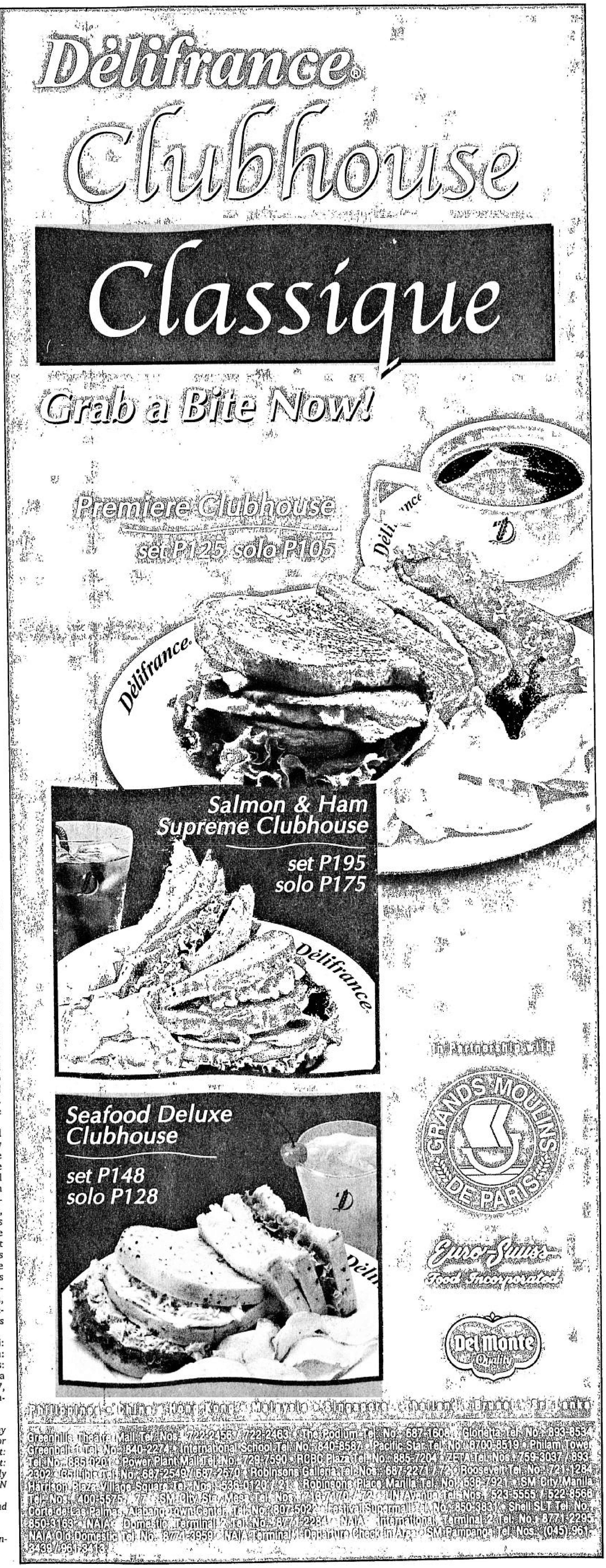

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Imedeen, a pioneer in "systemic skincare" (skincare from within), now introduces Imedeen Time Perfection™ — a skincare in tablet form with an advanced dual-action formula containing two key ingredients: the patented LycoPhence GS ™ and the exclusive Biomarine Complex ™.

LycoPhence GS is a unique combination of potent antioxidants based on Lycopene (known to be twice as potent as Vitamin C) and Grape Seed extract (said to be 50 times more powerful than Vitamin E). Antioxidants are essential health builders that can also slow down skin ageing by means of neutralizing the free radicals, the main cause of skin cell damage.

But when skin structure is already weak or is showing deterioration, another ingredient is needed to help revitalize or rebuild that condition — the Biomarine Complex. Also found in Imedeen Classic, the Biomarine Complex in Imedeen Time Perfection may help nourish and strengthen the inner layers of the skin where ageing begins. With a better ability to hold essential moisture, skin feels softer, looks more radiant, and has an overall improved quality and texture.

Imedeen Time Perfection was recently launched in the Philippines and is available at selected department stores and beauty centers. For more information, check out www.imedeen.com.

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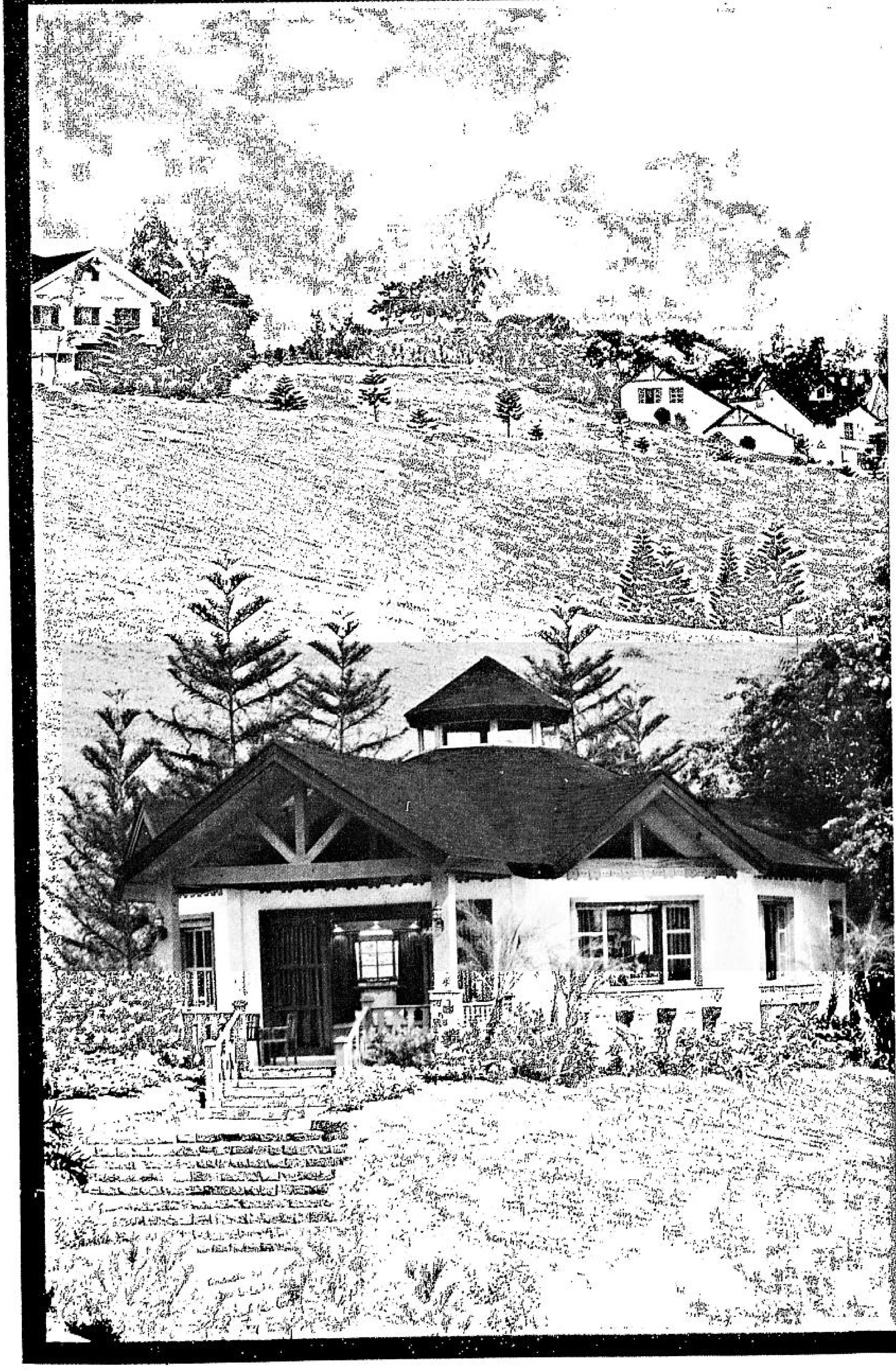

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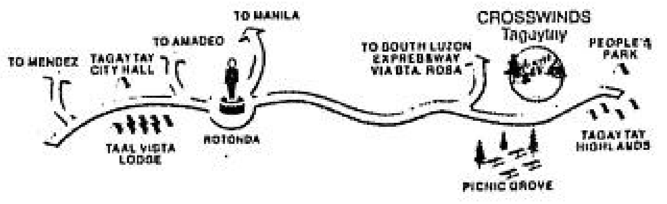

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Fun second childhood for execs /E2

# LIFESTYLE

# Che Guevara rises from the dead, chic to chic

**REVOLUTION** in fashion has returned Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara on the hottest T-shirts internationally, including this one available locally at Artwork, with branches at all major malls

RUDY ESPERAS

NEW YORK—Sam & Seb is a children's clothing store in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn that specializes in the sort of garments—tiny Levi's, baby Dries van Noten tops—that have been created with the assumption that 3-year-olds don't want to look 3. But a while back the store's owner, Simone Manwarring, began getting requests for an item that was unusual even by those standards.

"Lots of parents were coming in and saying, 'Hey, wouldn't it be great to have a Che T-shirt?' " Manwarring said. By Che, the parents meant, of course, the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary executed by Bolivians in 1967, whose beret-wearing image once adorned college dormitories from Berkeley to the Sorbonne. Manwarring started making the shirts, with sizes even for a 3-month-old. She now sells about 10 a week.

The Che industry has been fairly robust over the years, with keepsakes including posters, cigarette lighters, watches and nail clippers sold in many parts of the world. But lately it is clothing with the image of the rebel, from the iconic photo taken in 1960 by Alberto Korda, that seems ever more coveted as street wear. It has turned up on Moscow artists and on 11-year-old boys in the New York suburbs. In the last six months, sales of fitted T-shirts, loose T-shirts, tank tops, hooded sweatshirts, caps and camp shirts have increased by about 40 percent at Thechestore.com, said John Trigiani, the company's owner. Trigiani began selling Che paraphernalia about five years ago after he returned home to Toronto from Cuba with a statuette he had bought for $2, and resold on eBay for $128.

## Give me a rebel, but hold the politics

Why the renewed interest in Che, when so many communist governments have failed? Trigiani said, "I think there are many reasons for this and one of them is Mike Tyson."

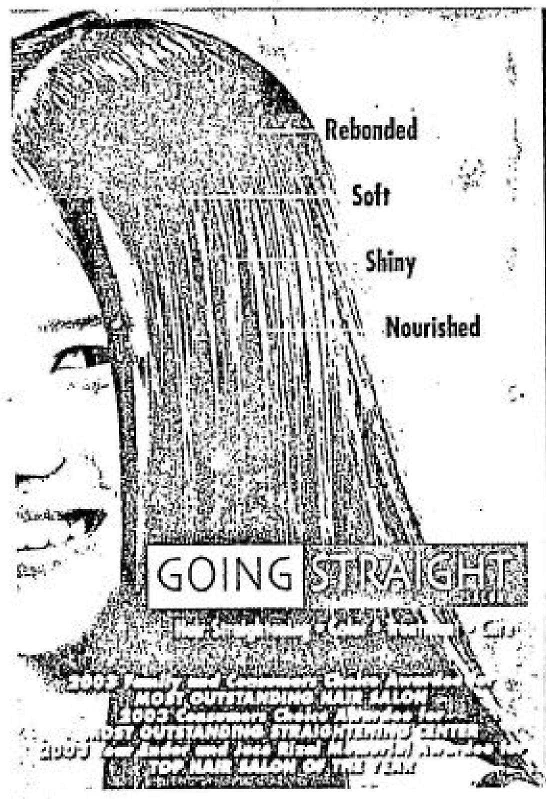
A few years ago, the prizefighter got a picture of Che etched onto his rib cage. Other catalysts include two coming movies, one "The Motorcycle Diaries," based on the journals Che kept during his travels through South America as a medical student in 1952. That film appeared at the Sundance Film Festival in January and is due in theaters later this year. The second film, an epic called "Che" to be directed by Terrence Malick, is beginning production next year.

Revolutionary ideology seems to have almost nothing to do with the emerging Che style, which is manifest also in men's sweaters, high-end bikinis and underwear. "I met a college student who wanted the T-shirts, and she had absolutely no idea who Che was," Trigiani said.

Patrick Symmes, the author of "Chasing Che: A Motorcycle Journey in Search of the Guevara Legend," said, "I think the more that time goes by, the chicer and chicer Che gets because the less he stands for anything."

About two years ago, Symmes said, he discovered a bar in London called Che. "It's ultradeluxe and a young guy was the owner," Symmes said, referring to Hani Farsi, a wealthy Saudi Arabian. "I asked him, 'Why Che?' and he answered, 'Oh you know, rebellion and all that.' "

*New York Times News Service*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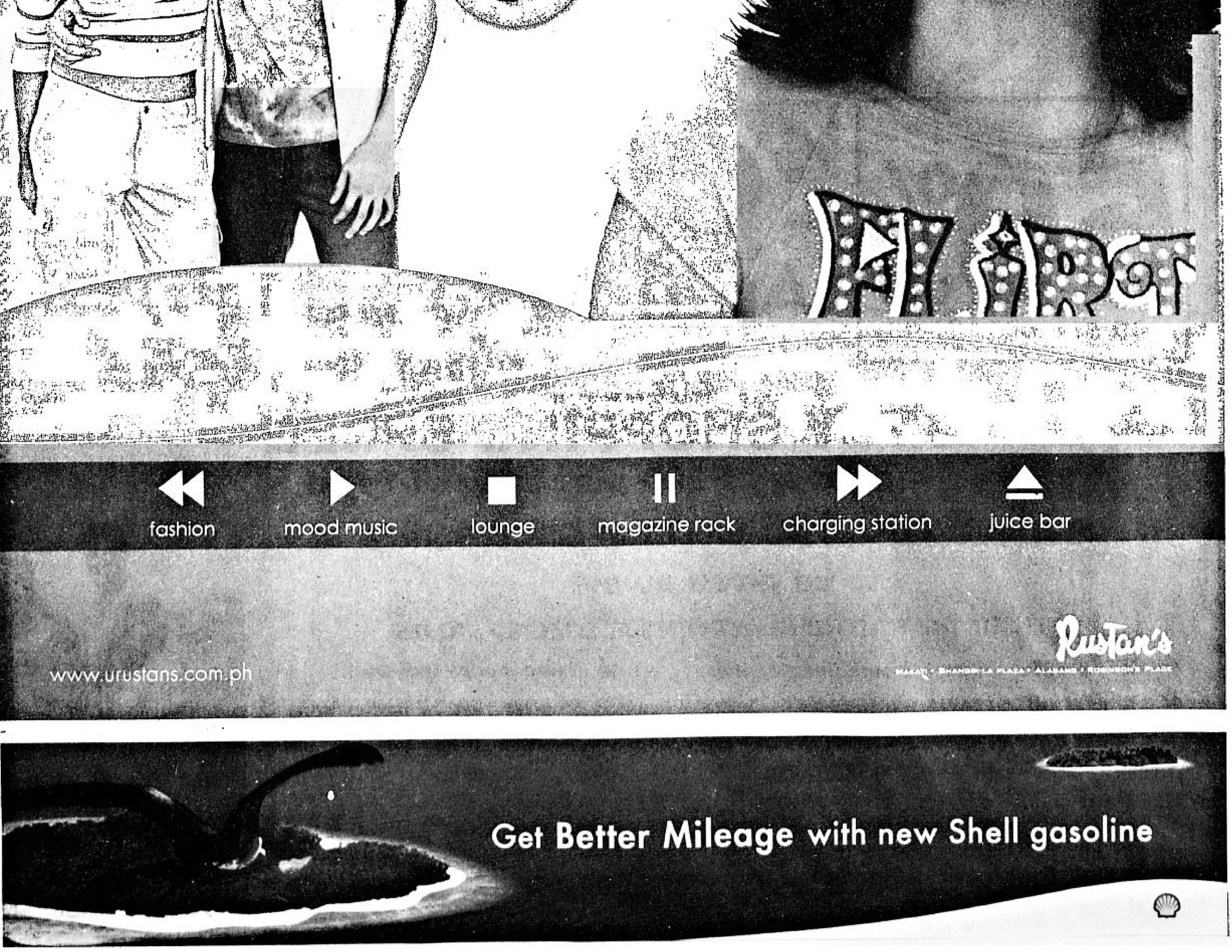
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**CHILLING** it with cool white wine: Beauties Bianca Zobel and Amaya Barretto with good-looking adventurer Freddie Elizalde

**CAR** aficionados Robert Coyiuto Jr., chair of PGA Cars, and Danny Ocampo

# Execs get to

IT WAS a scene straight out of a children's par Staff members, guests, tournament partic pants and even the caddies came in colorf party costumes for the Seventh APT Cup, *palan gas*.

The gold carts were decked with colorful, brigl trimmings of cartoon characters, as the APT (A lines, Ports and Telecommunications) heav weights competed in the one-of-a-kind golf tourn ment, which had asked everybody to "come as cha acters in a kids' birthday party."

The APT Golf Cup is an annual event first org nized in 1997 by **Arthur Tugade** of Transglob Consolidators Inc. to build a strong bond amon freight industry executives.

Hotshot executives and managers of the differe companies came to the Orchard Gold Club in the wackiest children's party costumes. It was hilario to see graying, balding, middle-aged executives, a gamely dressed up as characters from "Flintstones "The Simpsons," "Sesame Street," "Pocahonta and "Aladdin."

Kiddie snacks and ice cream were made availab at every refreshment kiosk on the greens.

However, dahlings, the very attractive hole-i one prizes were certainly not for children, but f jet-setters with an expensive lifestyle; they were f big boys who love to buy big toys: a 2004 Crosswi sponsored by Isuzu Motors, a complete Honna Go Set donated by **Rolly Enriquez** of Remec, a Toyo Hi Lux donated by lawyer **Nick Lazaro** and Justi **Bojie Reyes**, and a ticket to the US of A, sponsore by Asiana Airlines.

The winners in the men's division were, dru roll, please: (Class A) **Erick Gozo** of Riviera Go (champion), **Dan Salvador** of DFS Builders (first runner-up), **Jay-Art Tugade** of Transglobal Trucking (second runner-up) and **Richard Hong** of Daeduck (third runner-up); (Class B) **B.J. Kim** of Korean Airlines (champion); **Henry Kim** of Daeduck (first runner-up), **Alex Honrado** of Fast Info Link (second runner-up) and **Ho Seok Suh** of Asiana Airlines (third runner-up); (Class C) **Rolly Enriquez** of Remec (champion), **Cesar Enriquez** of PLDT (first runner-up), **Buddy Madrigal** of Pa Pags (second runner-up) and **Boy Sangco** of Erm tano law firm (third runner-up); and (Class D) **B Arvesu** of Yusen Air and Sea Services (champion **Leo Lacbo** of Panalpina (first runner-up), **Ren Enriquez** of PLDT (second runner-up) and **Lu Carreon** of Nippo Cargo Air (third runner-up).

**WITHOU**
**BATTING**
**AN EYEL**

*Maurice*
*Arcache*

Photos by **Al**
on **Kodak M**

Winners in the ladies division were: (Class A **Finina Gorres** of PLDT (champion), **Marthy d Rosario** (first runner-up) and **Elena Ong** (secon runner-up); and (Class B) **Hyung Young L** (champion), **Patricia Francisco** (first runner-u and **Beverly Rodriguez** (second runner-up).

Lowest Net went to **Powie Tugade** of Transglob Consolidators Inc. and Lowest Gross to **Pa Salvador** of DFS Builders.

The prizes for fun games per hole were donat by PLDT, Panalpina, MAP Logistics, as well as **Benny Donsol** of FIT, **Nap Marigomen** of Kore Airlines, **Jojo Bautista** of Clark Airport Suppo Services, Nick Lazaro and Buddy Madrigal of Pa Pags, Transglobal.

The tournament was organized by a committ with **Leo Tagle** of Yusen Air and Sea Services chair, and **Edwin Rodriguez** of RCS Logistics vice-chair.

But that didn't end there, *palanggas*. Prizes we raffled off during the buffet dinner which capp this truly one-of-kind super fun tournament.

## C! in second gear

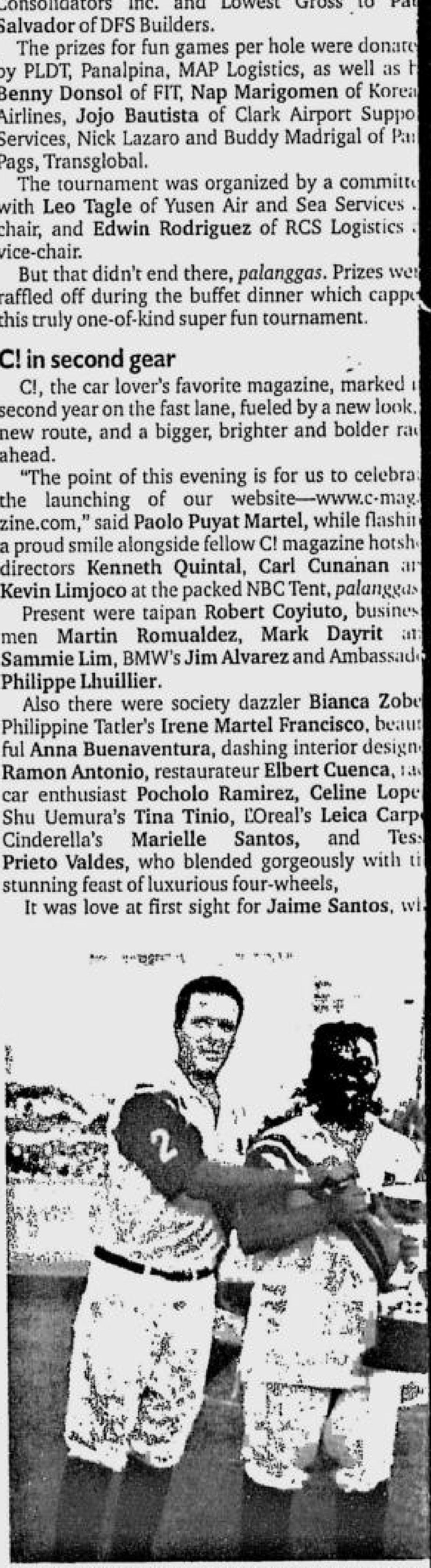
C!, the car lover's favorite magazine, marked second year on the fast lane, fueled by a new look new route, and a bigger, brighter and bolder ra ahead.

"The point of this evening is for us to celebra the launching of our website—www.c-mag zine.com," said **Paolo Puyat Martel**, while flashi a proud smile alongside fellow C! magazine hotsh directors **Kenneth Quintal**, **Carl Cunanan** a **Kevin Limjoco** at the packed NBC Tent, *palanggas*

Present were taipan **Robert Coyiuto**, busine men **Martin Romualdez**, **Mark Dayrit** a **Sammie Lim**, BMW's **Jim Alvarez** and Ambassad **Philippe Lhuillier**.

Also there were society dazzler **Bianca Zob** Philippine Tatler's **Irene Martel Francisco**, beau ful **Anna Buenaventura**, dashing interior design **Ramon Antonio**, restaurateur **Elbert Cuenca**, car enthusiast **Pocholo Ramirez**, **Celine Lop** Shu Uemura's **Tina Tinio**, L'Oreal's **Leica Carp** Cinderella's **Marielle Santos**, and **Tes Prieto Valdes**, who blended gorgeously with t stunning feast of luxurious four-wheels,

It was love at first sight for **Jaime Santos**, w



THE WINNING team: Iñigo Zobel with Prince Ra

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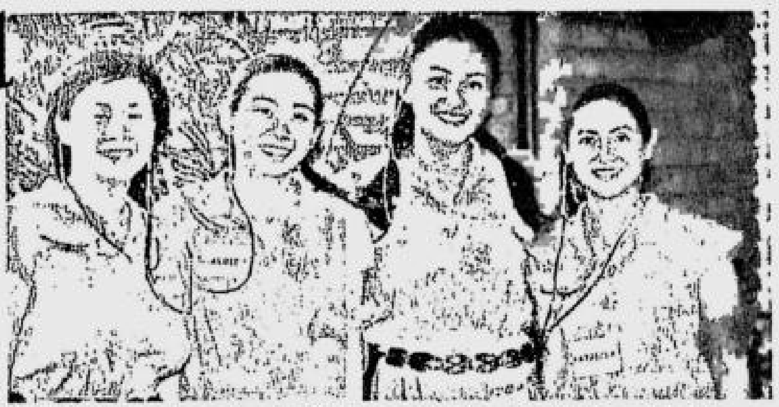
# ave a fun second childhood

**THE HOT-HOT** shots of the tournament: Rene Enriquez of PLDT; Jei Panganiban of RH Panganiban; Oman Santiago of Thai Airways; chair Leo Tagle of Yusen; Jay-Art Tugade and Powie Tugade of TGC; Fred Lim of Chavez; Boy Sangco of Ermitano; Bojie Reyes of the Court of Appeals; Rickson Chiong of NBI Baguio; Nor Guanlao of Ermitano; Benjie Chy of Boi; and (seated) Nick Lazaro of MC Bernardo



**HOT** Pocahontas ladies: HSBC's Jeannie Yap, Harriet Peralta of Lufthansa Cargo, Finina Tugade of Perry's and Map Logistics' Patricia Francisco

*HALA bira!* Ati-atihan boys: Expeditors' Aries Aniceto with Buddy Madrigal of Pair-Pags and OOCL's Toti Gimenez

**SWASHBUCKLING** with the "Pirates of the Caribbean": John David of Eva Air Cargo with Apo Hiking Society's Boboy Garovillo, Junoy Verano of Verano Law Firm, and Mario Pangan of Philippine Airlines

**THE LITTLE** drummer boys: NEC's Junichi Shiomi, William Hong of Remetech, NYK Fil Ship's Mar Raneses and Rey Infante

said, "My new sports car will last me a lifetime—of monthly payments." Ouch!

Hors d'oeuvres flowed like a speedster in the Autobahn, courtesy of Cosmo Manille's royal restaurateur, **Margarita Fores.** The unlimited supply of wine added to the high-velocity fetê.

## Royal Pahang Cup

x Van Hagen
ax

Royalty breezed into town when His Majesty Sultan **Ahmad Shah** of the Sultanate of Pahang Darulmakmur, Malaysia, and his famille and entourage graced the Royal Pahang Cup at the Manila Polo Club.

Also present was Prince **Abdullah.** Playing was Prince **Rahnan.**

Held during a breezy, cool, sunny afternoon, the tournament was graced by Manille's hotshot A-listers and VIPs, *palanggas*.

Making a scene-stopping entrance was **Imelda Marcos** who was among the first to occupy the reserved VIP seats. The Aranetas, the Elizaldes, the Zobels and ambassadors soon followed.

The low-goal match between the Whites and the Blacks was simply breathtaking, with Manila Polo Club past president and veteran polo player **Toni Garcia** playing for the Whites, together with **Arce Suzuki, Dino Santos** and **Dondi Santos.**

The Whites won, 5 ½ to 4, over the Blacks which consisted of **Rosanna Yulo**, the only female polo player in the country, **Edwin Arce** of the popular Arce Ice Cream, **Anthony Filamor,** and good-looking **Sonny Borromeo.**

As always, the highlight of this chi-chi event was the high-goal match between the Reds and the Blues. The Reds' Prince Rahaan, **Iñigo Zobel, Ricky Yabut** and **Louie Castillejo** put up a fantastic fight against **Vince Bitong, Sam Gunn,** and good-looking dudes **Anthony Garcia** and **José Constantino** of the Blues.

The star of the afternoon was Ricky Yabut, who beautifully led the Reds to an astounding victory, 15 to 9. Sultan Ahmad Shah rose from his royal seat and led the royal applause, dahlings.

**IMELDA** Marcos with His Majesty, Sultan Ahmad Shah of Pahang, Darulmalmub, Malaysia

**CROWN** Prince Abdullah

**MANILA** Polo Club president Rom Azanza

nan, Ricky Yabut and Louie Castillejo

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*1.* The Search for Game Show Contestants is open to all males and females, ages 18 to 25 years old. *2.*Applicants must possess a high degree of self-confidence and have distinct/interesting personalities. *3.*Applicants must be healthy, physically fit with perfect teeth. *4.*Interested parties must submit any 150 mL carton of Colgate Fresh Confidence and present the product, along with his/her bio-data, a photocopy of his/her birth certificate and a medium or full body photo at ABS-CBN to be able to audition. Auditions will be held on April 17 and 18, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at ABS-CBN Studio 1, Sgt. Esguerra corner Mother Ignacio St., Quezon City. *5.*Aspiring contestants should look for Maricor Ferrer of ABS-CBN.

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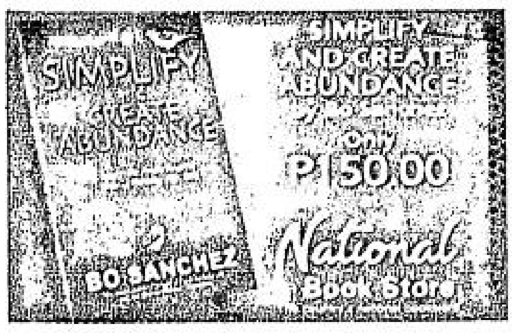
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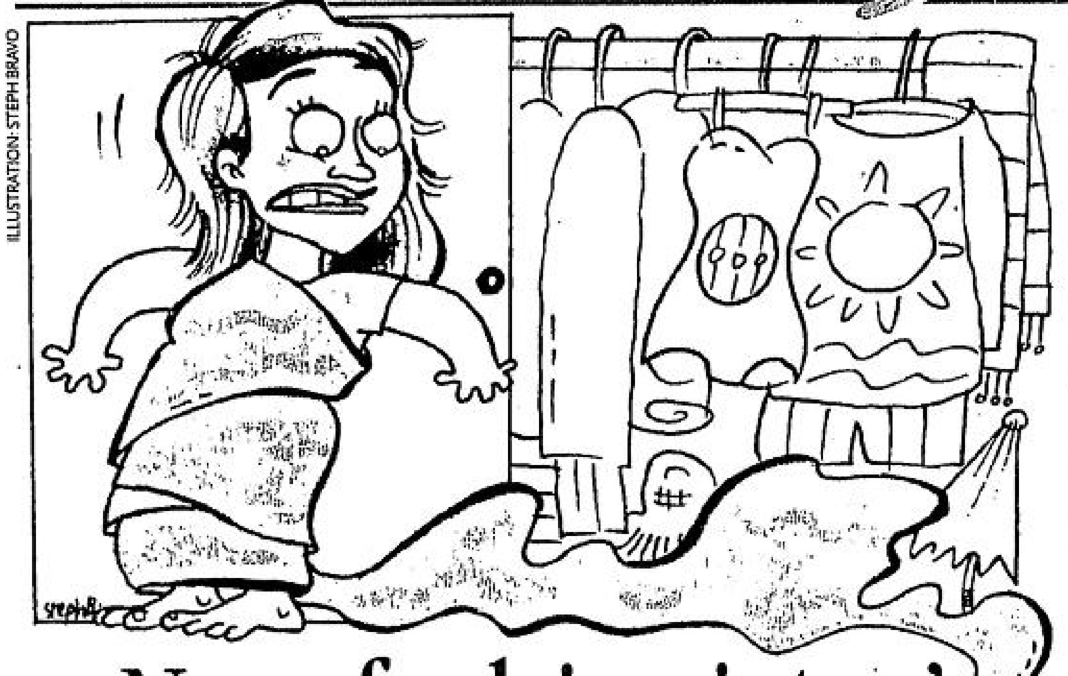


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

# Non-fashionistas' guide to Boracay

**LIFE-STYLED**

*Thelma Sioson San Juan*

THANKS to Lifestyle Network's **Chinky de Jesus** and **Law Tan**, who had this glorious idea of hauling us all to Boracay this coming weekend, I spent Easter morning revisiting my closet, on top of revisiting my life. To be more specific, I did a panic-inventory of my sarongs and such.

We live in an era when "Bora" has become an inescapable part of escapist (from politics, why not?) life. People I know are set to fly there any day now, if they're not just back from there after Lent. In contrast, I've spent recent vacations canceling trips to Bora, if not Shanghai or Beijing—nothing deliberate or personal; it was just that every time I was set to go to any of these places, man-made disasters happened. If it wasn't a coup, it could be SARS or, worse, board meetings.

I knew sooner or later I'd have to go to Bora, if only because my dear friend, **Louie Cruz**, is there—he who, I've always believed, single-handedly put Bora back on the hip lifestyle map of the country. Like I said, where Louie is, swinging life (okay, I'm putting it mildly) follows. I've always told him he's a "vice magnet," but more on that in future columns.

So—barring similar disasters, this week is it; there's no dodging this Bora trip. Back to the panic-wardrobe planning.

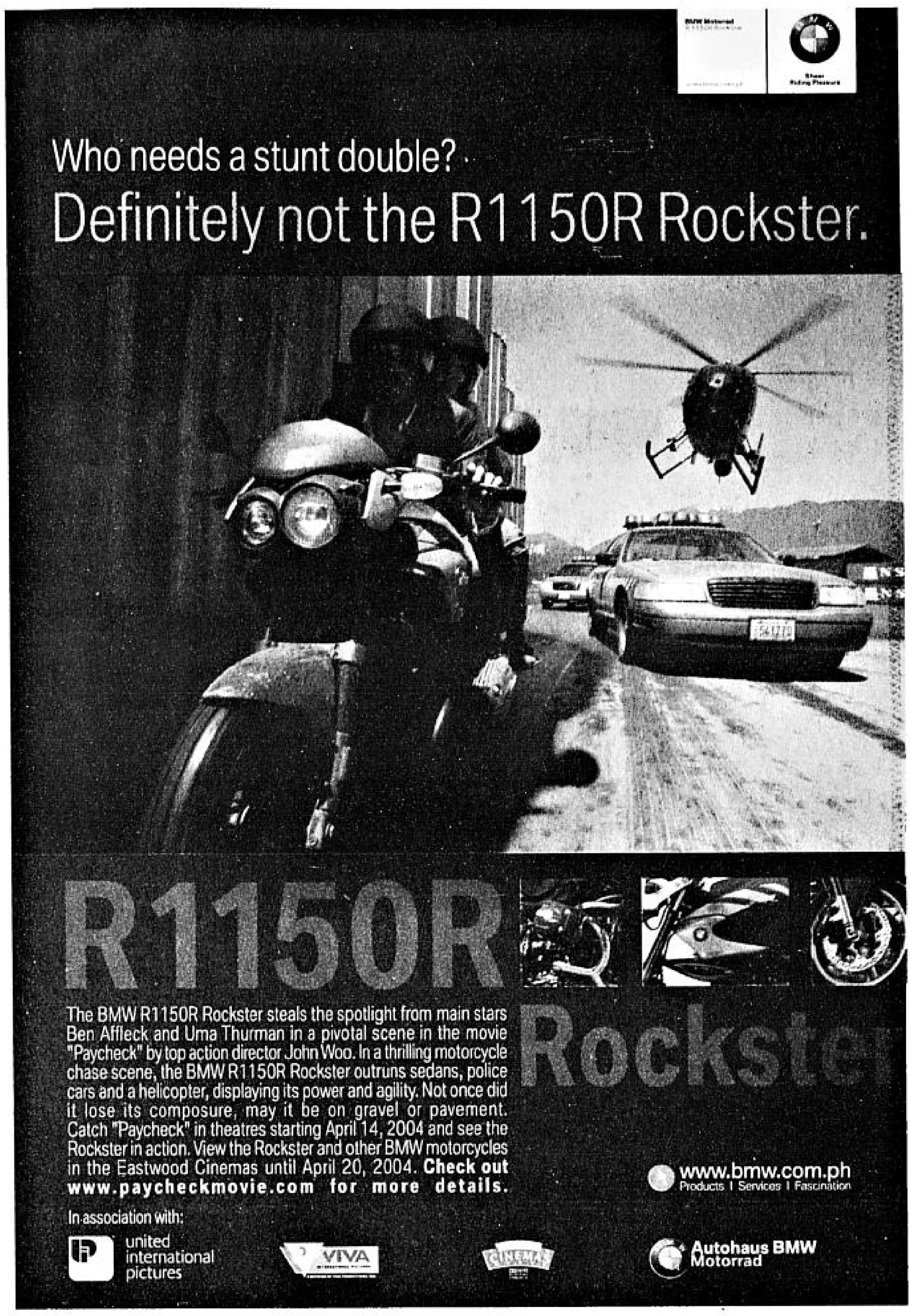
I know many (almost all?) girls starve—I mean, starve—in preparation for a trip to Boracay. To be in a Bora mode is to go low- or no-carb, and do double-time in the gym because one has to don two-piecers, tanks, wraps, you get the idea. But then, how about the rest of the vacationing population that doesn't belong to either of the two categories: hot babes or hot hunks.

You don't need Pulse Asia to know that segment has a margin more sizeable than any presidential candidate stands to make in May. So if you're among the millions who don't feel that you have the right to flash your navel in Boracay (or anywhere else), this is for you.

How can you go vacation-chic and still keep your bulges under wrap?

As our exec **Monchet Olives** said, ours is still a "sarong leisure generation." But what if you don't want to go into a batik-or-dyed-

NON-FASHIONISTAS'/F3


Who needs a stunt double?
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R1150R Rockster

The BMW R1150R Rockster steals the spotlight from main stars Ben Affleck and Uma Thurman in a pivotal scene in the movie "Paycheck" by top action director John Woo. In a thrilling motorcycle chase scene, the BMW R1150R Rockster outruns sedans, police cars and a helicopter, displaying its power and agility. Not once did it lose its composure, may it be on gravel or pavement. Catch "Paycheck" in theatres starting April 14, 2004 and see the Rockster in action. View the Rockster and other BMW motorcycles in the Eastwood Cinemas until April 20, 2004. **Check out www.paycheckmovie.com for more details.**

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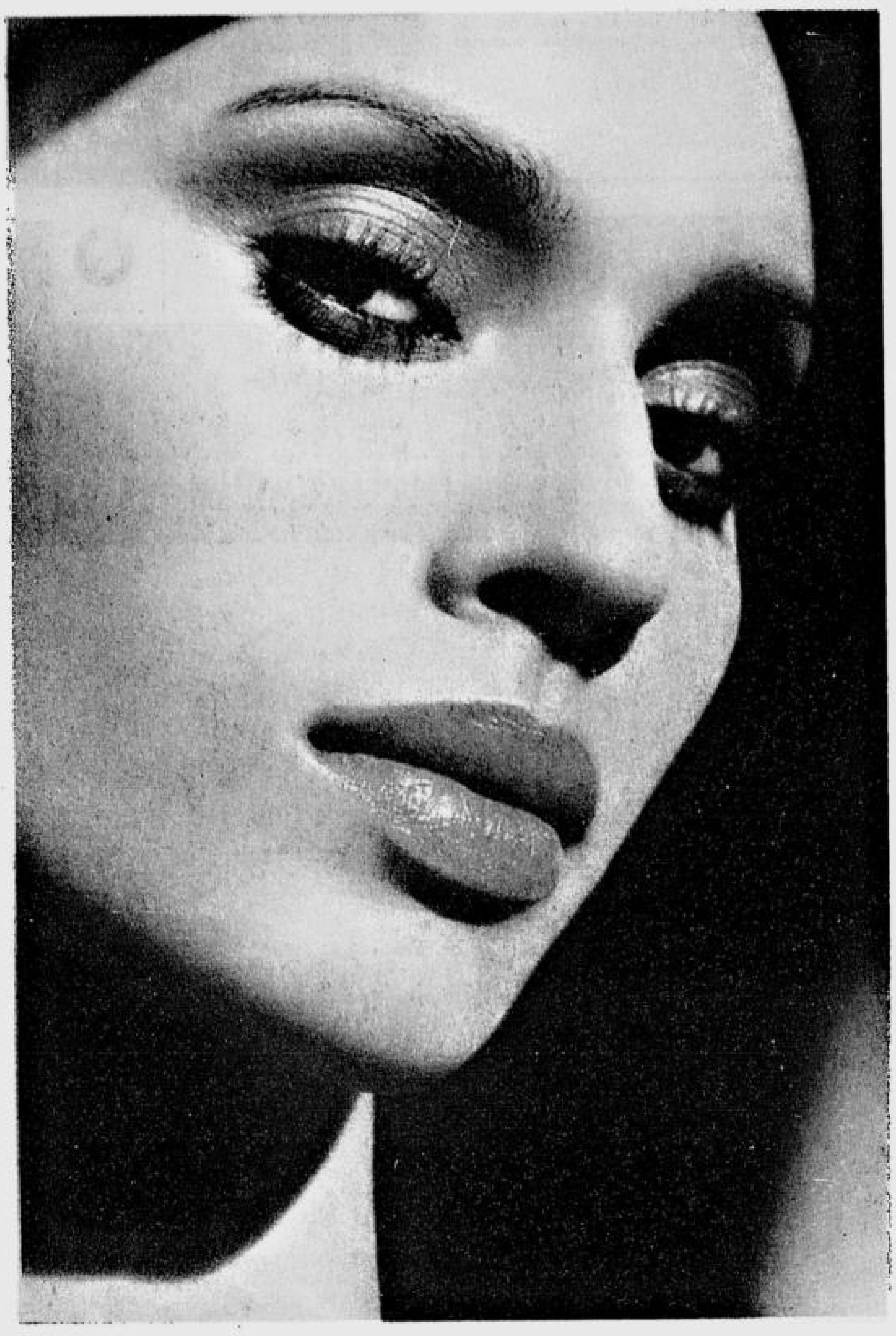


**SMOKY** and sensual is the Spring 2004 look from YSL

# Island colors spell drama

## Vivid shades of tropical flowers and faraway oceans are the hottest makeup

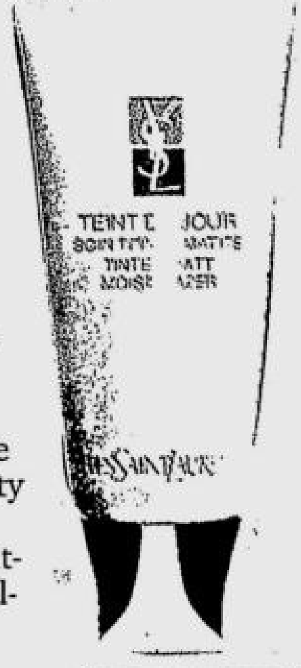
LIKE the striking beauty look worn by the models on the Spring/Summer 2004 runway, with tousled hair and intense smoky eyes, the new Spring beauty look from Yves Saint Laurent exudes a bold glamour and a dramatic—almost untouchable—sensuality.

Linda Cantello, artistic adviser for makeup to Yves Saint Laurent, explains that the collection is inspired by the darker tint of Teint de Jour tinted matt moisturizer, a new shade called Hazelnut. "It gives the skin the warm glow of a beautiful woman—it has that sexy, almost untouchable exoticism. Wear it and be immediately transported to an island of paradise with hibiscus flowers, bougainvillea petals, and azure oceans."

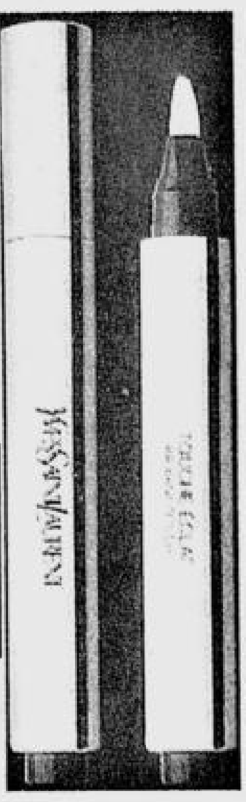
YSL is available at Rustan's Makati and Rustan's Tower in Shangri-La Plaza.

### For the complexion

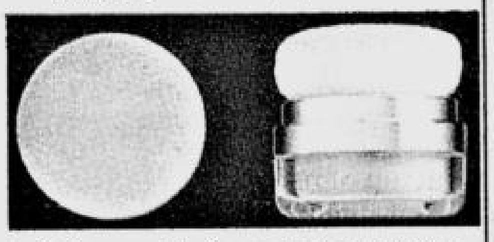
This exotic and dramatic look is created on a complexion warmed with a healthy, hot-weather glow, as if kissed with sun and spices.



1. **Teint de Jour N° 6 in Hazelnut**, a slightly dark tint, is swept over the skin. This highly wearable tinted matt moisturizer protects and cares for the skin with hydrating properties while giving the face a radiant and natural finish.



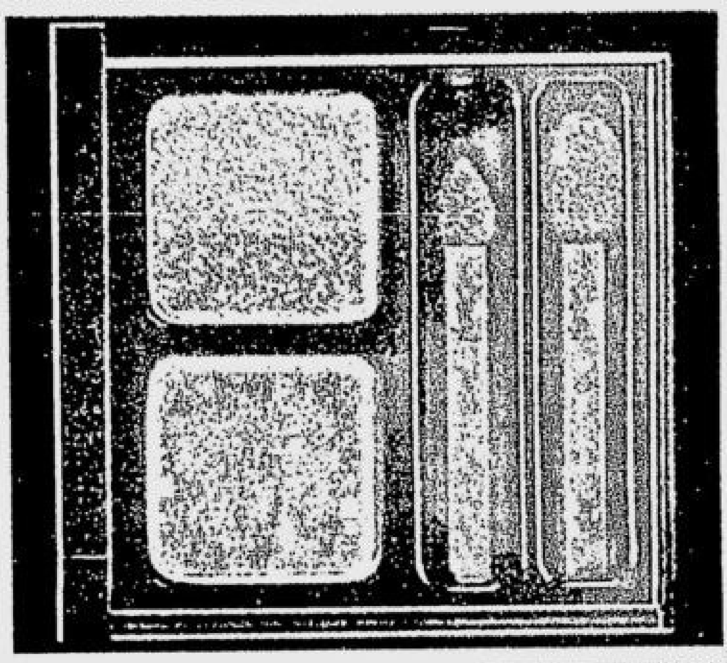
2. **Touche Eclat N° 3 in Light Peach**, the signature highlighter pen designed to touch-up the face throughout the day, is blended onto selected areas of the face, instantly erasing shadows and brightening the skin around the eyes, nose or chin.



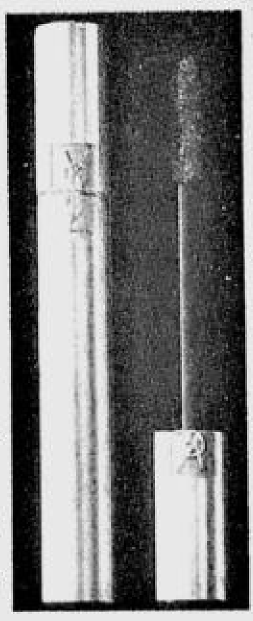
3. To complete the sensual complexion of this new Spring look, a sweep of new **Touche Blush N° 3 in Spice**, a cinnamon-tinted pink, warms up the cheekbones.

### For your eyes only

This season, intensely colored eyes make magic. As if mirroring an azure ocean framed by lush green jungle, the eyes come alive in a stunning shimmer of blue-green velvet powder—the color of earth and ocean combined.



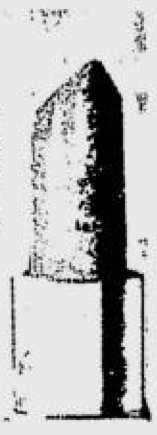
1. **Ombres Vibration Duo N° 29, Peacock Blue**, is smoothed over the eyelid and the socket line. Then the Duo's second shade, **Iris**, is applied below the lower lashes and blended outward, to meet the Peacock Blue with Rewash of vibrant purple.



2. The eye is defined with a jolt of purple-black mascara, **Mascara Volume Effet Faux CILS N°4, Fascinating Violet's** unique triple-film complex achieves intense and long-lasting volume.

### For lips and nails

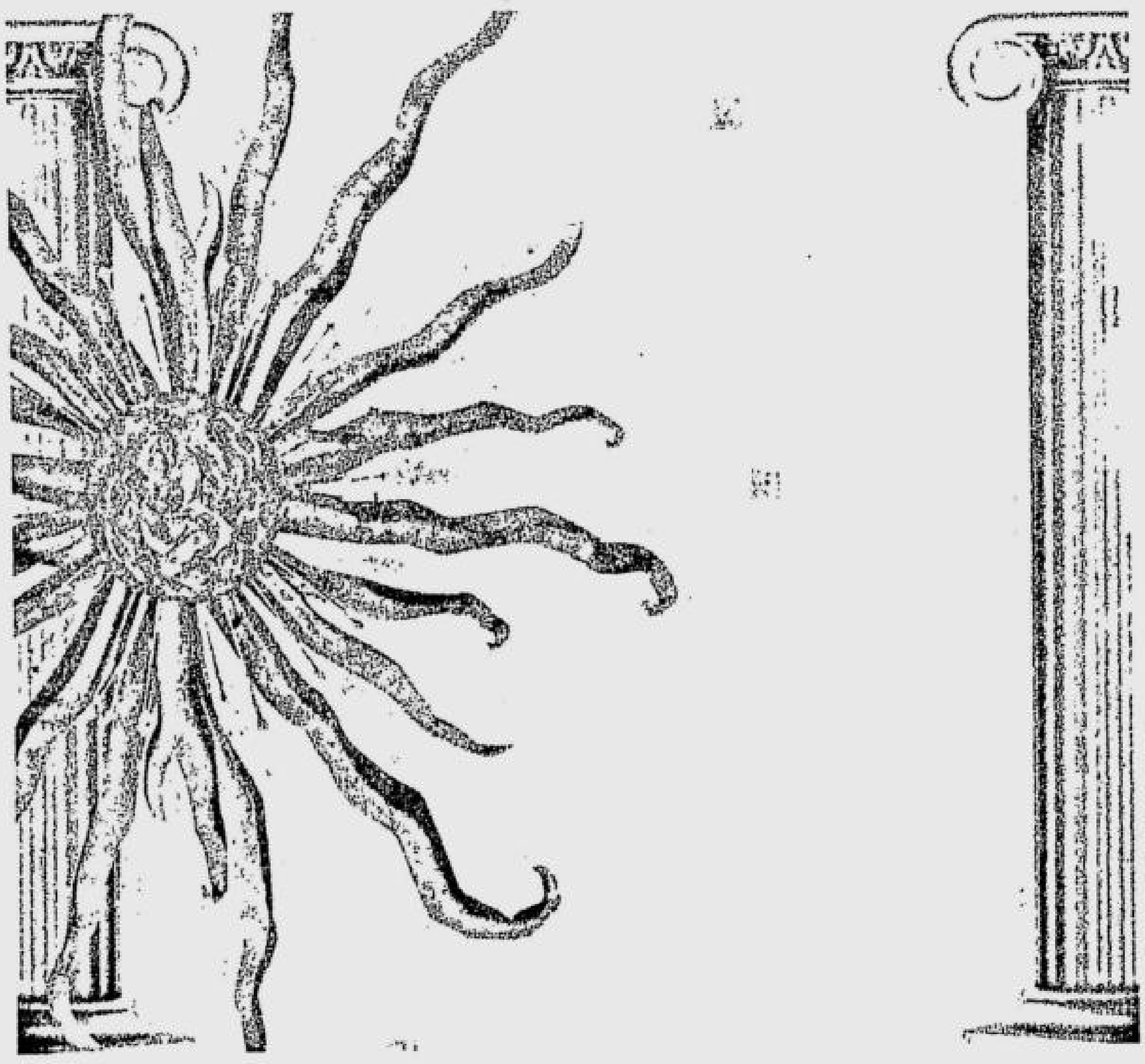
Luscious color also explodes on the mouth. To set off the intense shade of the eyes, the bold Spring face is finished with a vibrant new shade of pure orange-red on the lips.



1. On the lips, **Fard à Lèvres Rouge Pur N° 98, Papaya Orange**, is an unforgettable flaming shade cast in a creamy and luminous texture that stays fresh for hours.

2. On the nails, **Vernis Naturel Traitant N° 1, Ceramic Beige**, is a high-gloss slick of a muted beige that highlights the tanned skin of summer and makes fingers look impossibly long.

EVENTS AT THE PEN 2004



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# Non-fashionistas' guide to Boracay

From page F1

overload? (I don't want to look like a walking Orientalia sale on the beach.)

I fished out this breeze-soft cobalt blue silk sari that must be acres-long and for a while wrapped it around and around the body. Honestly, it looked good except that I'd have to ask **Auggie Cordero** to turn it into sarong size.

To do that, I'll have to zap my ego as this old friend of mine tells me stuff about my body that only an old friend could. So, forget the sari.

My closet diggings and a later visit to the mall (yeah, that serious) unearthed the following tricks which, I hope, you could adopt:

- Go resort-vintage. The craft-rich, ultra-feminine, old-world look remains steadfast. Even the latest collections, especially of the young designers in New York, show that vintage is still the way to go. So why not look fresh and cool, yet be vintage. At Karen Kane we found a black (yes, black) silk sleeveless top with very dainty rose pink embroidery—and, this is what did it for us, ruched down the front. In short, if you must wear a top (can't believe I said that), get one that looks different from all the tanks—like something seemingly old and finely sewn or embroidered or appliquéd, smockinged or ruched. Go for diaphanous cottons, muslins, silks or since we're at it, tulles. Aside from pastels, try oatmeal shades.
- Sarong or any wrap with a twist. Since sarongs are usually a print overload, be different and go for something solid. For a change, go for texture. This idea struck us when we dug up an old Silk Cocoon. It's a very long mint-green stole in rough silk accented with tiny and slightly shimmery (just slightly) gold strips. It looks attractively rough and crushed. Turn it into a wrap—a bandeau—held by a good clasp, and pair it with shorts, micro-minis or anything briefer than those.
- Go for the old reliables, but watch the strings. Capris, shorts, skorts, or just the strings.

If the above camouflage fashion for non-fashionistas isn't for you, there's an alternative: Starve.

## No more A&F magalogue

Loyal readers (read?) of the racy, cutting-edge magalogue Abercrombie & Fitch will surely miss all the beautiful and nude bodies. December was the last issue of this quarterly. Rolling out in its place is Youth, which will have more clothes than bare bodies. I know of so many friends who'll have an A&F withdrawal syndrome.

## Wrong brand in 'Sex and the City'

In the series' last episode, **Sarah Jessica Parker** fished out her signature nameplate necklace from her handbag and said it was a Dior bag. Turned out it was a vintage Judith Leiber. The HBO website had to straighten out the credits in its website.

Women's Wear Daily reported that the '60s icon **Veruschka** returned to the runway for designer **Jean-Paul Knott**. She's also doing her own clothes line to debut in July.

*For feedback, write tsanjuan@skyinet.net*

# Reunion set in Pampanga

From page F4

duct a seminar on studying overseas on April 17, 10 a.m.-12 nn, at the AIM Acceed Conference Center in Greenbelt, Makati. Call 8191001 or 8191002.

**FORUM.** The Center for Alternative and Relevant Education Foundation will hold its quarterly development forum on choosing alternative schools for children with special needs on April 17, 3-6 p.m., at Anabel's Restaurant, Tomas Morato, QC. Call 6874543.

**CONTEST.** Photographers are invited for an on-the-spot photo tilt with Puerto Princesa, Palawan as subject on April 17 and 18. Call 8435341 or 8137420.

**SEMINAR.** Corban Daycare and Learning Center will hold Easy English for Adults from April 18 to June 19, 2-5 p.m. Call 8093050 or 8426665.

**CONCERT.** On April 18, 6 p.m., the Sining Kalinangan-Mapua Institute of Technology Dance Company joins Concert at the Park.

**WORKSHOP.** Dramatis Personae launches a series of theater arts workshops starting April 19. It will culminate with a recital on June 6. The modules will be held at London Learning Center, Garden Island Tower Condominium, 34 N. Domingo St. corner Granada St., New Manila, QC. Call 7257159, 7224205 or 7250819.

**SEMINAR.** The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists will hold a seminar on Intellectual Property Rights on Copyright Law and related Philippine Laws on Librarianship on May 13-14 at 10/L Edsa Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. Call 9321295, 5275203 or 7241994.

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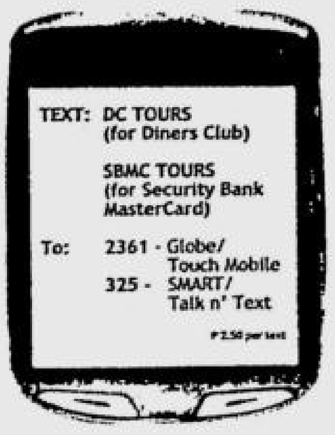
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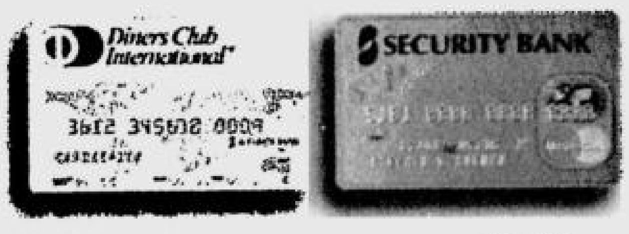
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# GOINGS ON

## Reunion set in Pampanga

ALL 1964 high school graduates of St. Scholastica's Academy, San Fernando, Pampanga are requested to attend the ruby reunion on April 18, lunchtime at the residence of Monette Tioleco-David (0916-9900739) at Del Pilar, San Fernando, Pampanga (near Everybody's Café, San Fernando, P. Highway). Call (0916) 7250000, (0917) 7907234, (0919) 8438418 and (0918) 9425230.

**WORKSHOP.** The Mandy Navasero Summer Photoworkshop Batch 2004 will be held April 17 to May 29, every Saturday, 2-5 p.m. The workshop is open to students, interior designers, architects, housewives, doctors and hobbyists, 15 years old and above. Participants should have their own 35 mm camera with interchangeable lens, preferably 105 mm, 20 mm or 28 mm or digital cameras. Call 8991767, 8963208.

**DISCOUNT.** Globe Platinum members who wish to watch the concert of Maksim Mrvica on April 20 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines will enjoy a 20-percent discount on admission tickets. Call 8911999.

**WORKSHOP.** Tower Book House will hold a writing workshop for children aged 8-18. Call 8156925, 8154938.

**CONFERENCE.** The UP Special Education Council and Maria Domenicana Child Development Center will hold its annual national benefit conference on special education on April 21, 22 and 23 at the Occupational Safety and Health Center, North Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, QC. Cal 9205301 local 5540.

**WORKSHOP.** Sinag Arts Foundation will hold a costume-making workshop using soft sculpture techniques. It will be conducted by Hiromi Kanai, a quilt artist and costume designer from Japan. The workshop will be held on April 23-25. Call 5313491 or 5319524.

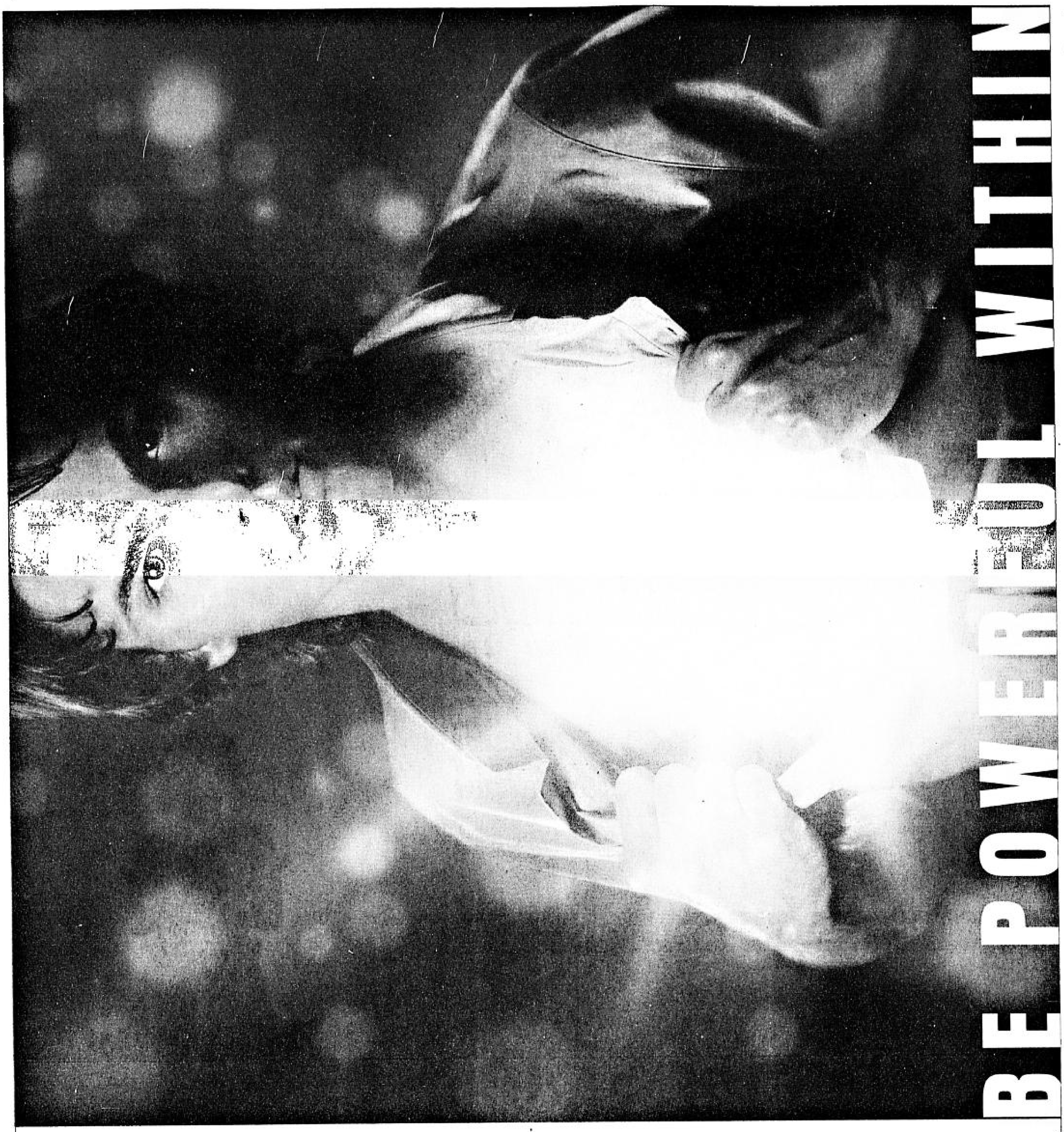
**CONCERT.** Singer Paul Sembrano will be featured tonight at 6 in Paco Park Presents. Joining him are Jasmin de la Cruz and Laarni Coderes.

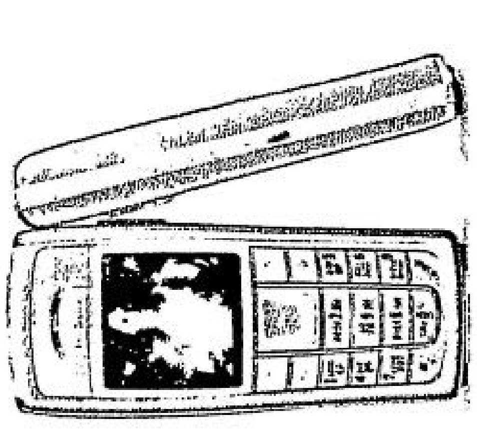
**SALE.** Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall will hold a summer sale today until April 18. Get a chance to win an air-conditioner in the raffle. A P300 single or accumulated purchase receipt entitles one to join. Tomorrow, 4- to 7-year-old kids compete in Search for Little Stars elimination round. Heart Evangelista will hold a fans' day on April 18.

**SCREENING.** Saga Productions and the Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines will have its final screening for this year's Bodyshots on April 17-18, 1-6 p.m. Venue is at the Century Park Hotel in Manila. Call 7125686, 7112032 or 8890387.

**SEMINAR** The International Education Specialists will con-

REUNION/ F3





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# LifeStyle

Kaye and Jojo Gamboa's new home bids goodbye to its old "hotel look" and now basks in luscious colors

# A touch of Mediterranean in the metro

**Text by Alex Y. Vergara**
**Photos by Chito Vecina**

AFTER six years of living in a contemporary dwelling with off-white and wallpapered walls and minimalist furniture pieces in one of Quezon City's exclusive villages, Kaye and Jojo Gamboa finally felt the need to refurbish their home into something that truly reflected their needs and personalities.

With the help of interior designer Martha Orosa Uy, they were able to come up with a Mediterranean-inspired home with floors made of warm *narra* planks and walls painted in such luscious shades as butter yellow, lime green and "champoy" red.

## Unique shades

Aside from her ability to combine colors, says the couple, one of Uy's strengths is her ability to mix various paints to come up with unique shades. Kaye learned of Uy's work from sister Faye Tañada. After Kaye read about a house the interior designer did in a magazine, she was finally convinced to hire her.

Thanks, too, to various furniture and accent pieces from all over Asia, the Gamboas were able to get away from the cold "hotel look" that once dominated their old home. The new furniture pieces are either made of solid hardwood or upholstered in bright prints. Faux beams, Italian tiles with floral patterns and Persian rugs add to the home's festive ambience.

Paintings by such Filipino artists as Malang, Belleza, Onglepho and Marivic Rufino have found their respective niches downstairs. Several antique Chinese cabinets double as armoires and storage areas for books and

A TOUCH/ G2

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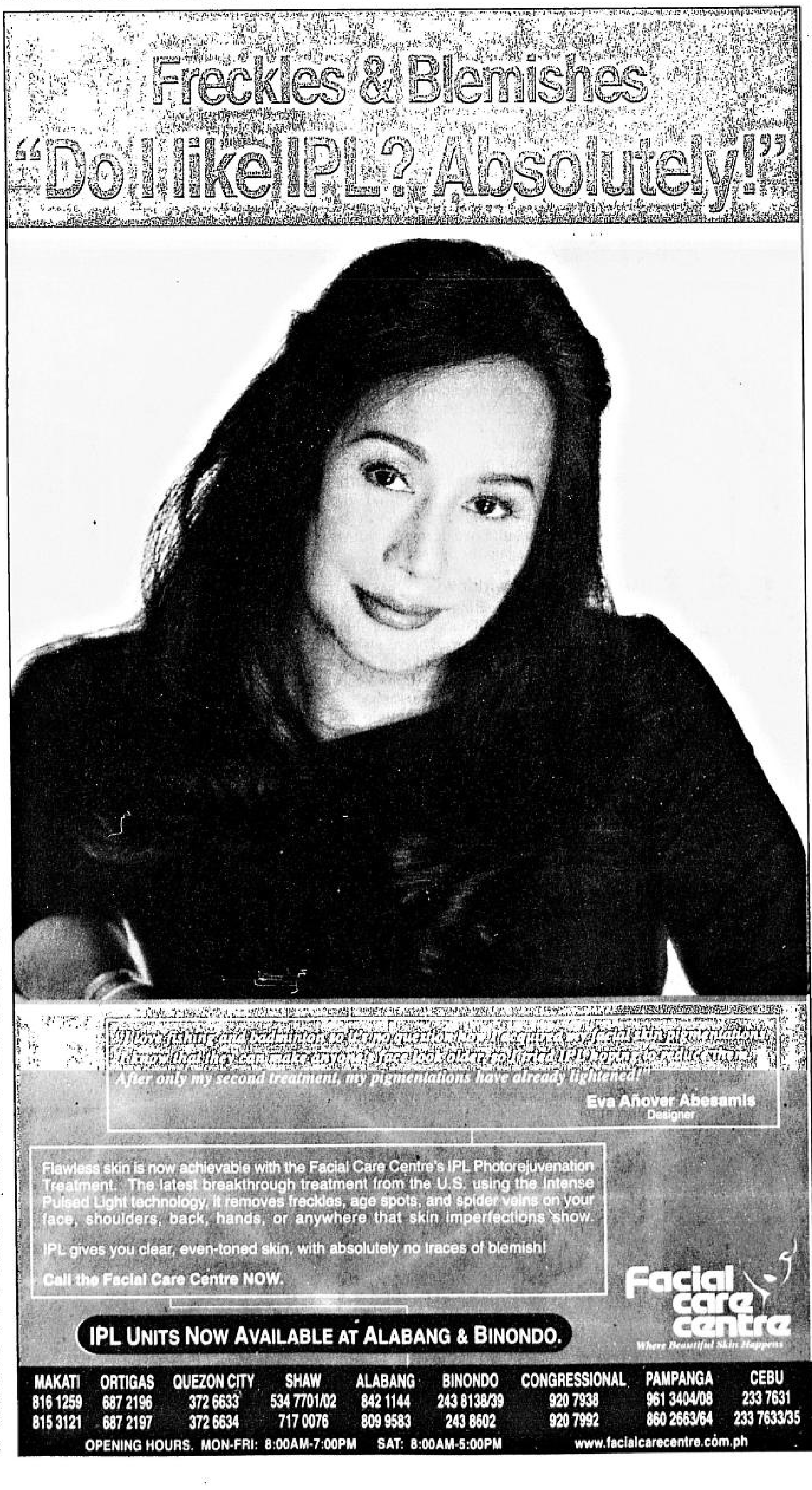
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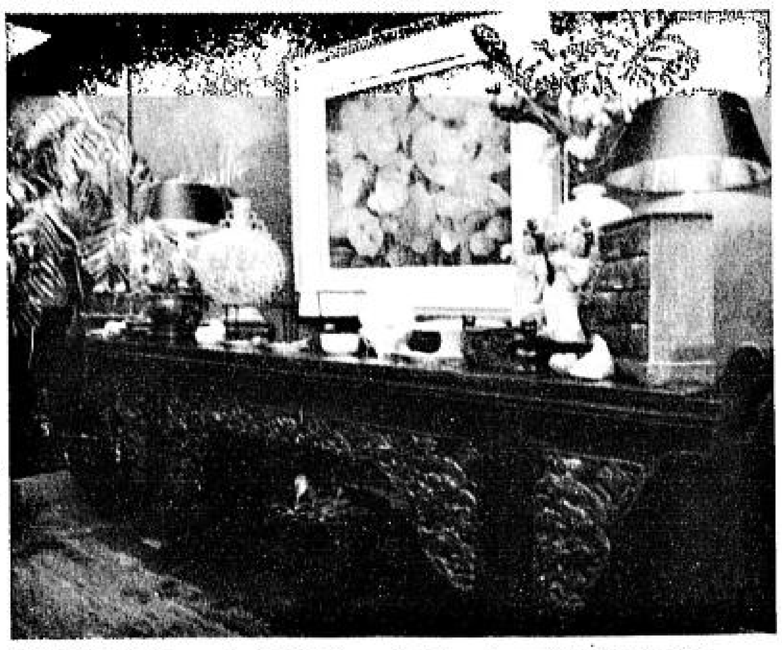
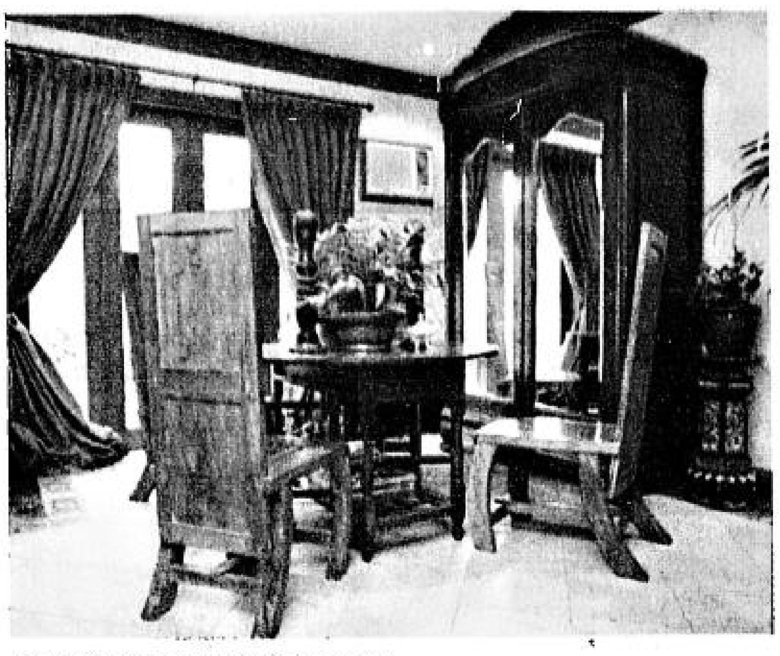
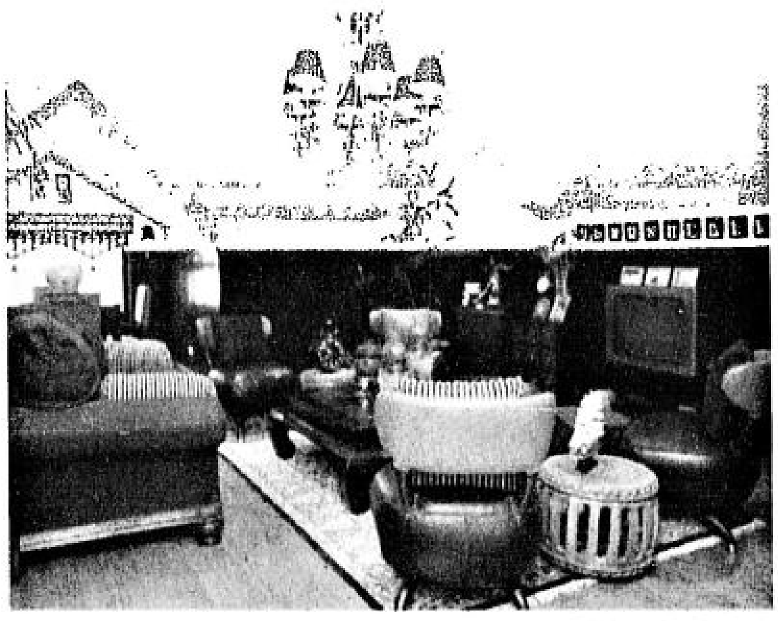


**ANTIQUE** Chinese buffet table and abstract work by Onglepho



**SITTING** area near the living room



**DEN** with a touch of modern English

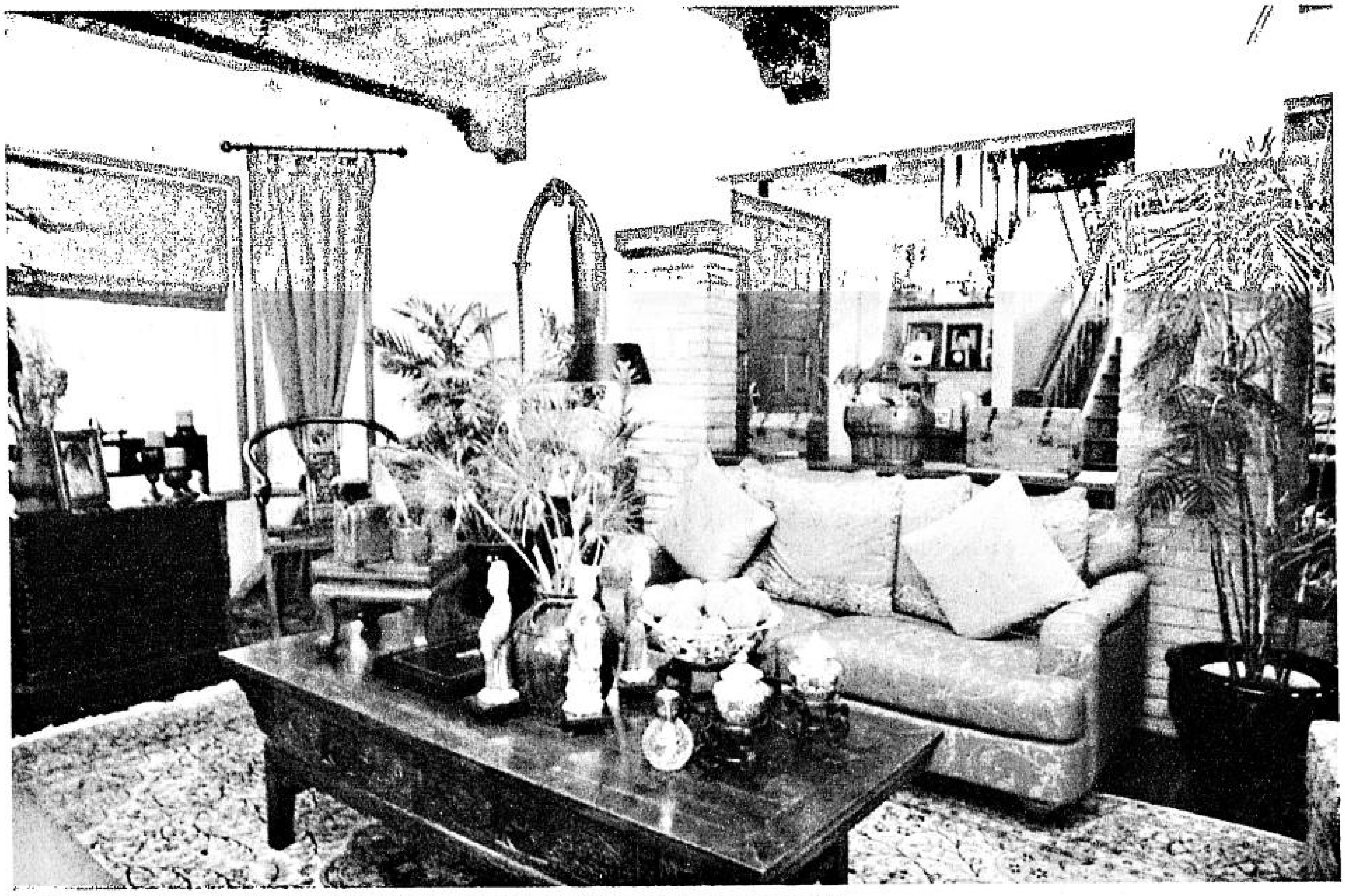
# A touch of Mediterranean in the metro

From page G1

entertainment gadgets.

"It was a collaborative effort that involved the three of us," says Kaye, who runs a trading business with Jojo. "But before work began in 2001, Martha asked us first how we are like as a family. In essence, we told her that we wanted a classic and homey look in keeping with our vibrant personalities."

Since they bought the house from a developer who was into build-and-sell, no such interview took place when they first moved in. Thus, the couple had to buy stark furniture and accent pieces that complemented the original house. Most of these items have found a new home in the couple's office.



**EAST** meets West in the Mediterranean-inspired living room with furniture and accent pieces from Asia.

## Price tag

The renovation nearly took almost two years, at a cost that surpassed the house's original price tag. But the Gamboas would rather dwell on the changes than the cost.

For almost a year, they moved from one part of the house to another in a vain attempt to steer clear of the ongoing construction. That was until Jojo's mom finally got sick from all that dust. The family finally had to rent a house at Valle Verde during the last seven months of construction.

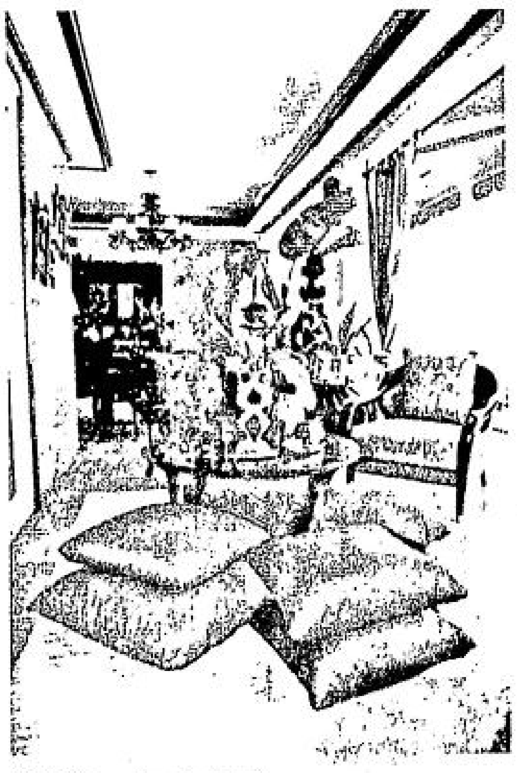
"At first, we only wanted to change the windows and maximize the lanai by having it paved," says Jojo. "But one thing led to another, and before we knew it, we were already thinking of sprucing up other areas of the house. Before things could get any worse, we decided to hire the services of professionals."

Surprisingly, the original structure remained almost intact, except for a number of walls that had to be knocked down. The couple was able to add an additional bedroom for Jojo's mother, turn the attic into the three boys' den, overhaul the lanai and reconfigure a number of public spaces.

The attic was originally meant as a storage area until Jojo thought of turning it into a den with a traditional English flavor. Thus, storage spaces are now limited to the four corners of the attic, each with a designated purpose and hidden from view by dark wooden panels.

In their haste to finish the attic, however, they didn't allot any room for windows. Despite the air conditioning, says Jojo, the heat in the den was unbearable. So in the end, they had to build two dormer windows that further jacked up the budget.

**KITCHEN** with its chessboard floor and Roman shades in canary yellow and "champoy" red



**WARM** and rustic lanai

## German-made windows

Aside from the peeling wallpapers, the marble floor downstairs and parquet floor upstairs had to go in favor of *narra* planks. Inferior windows were replaced with a German-made variety that Jojo swears keeps noise and dust from village streets at bay.

"They may be expensive," says Jojo, referring to the new windows, "but they're certainly worth it."

Incidentally, Jojo loves to hang out in the living room every morning to read the newspaper. The couple's favorite place, however, is the tiled lanai adorned with rustic pieces and lined with deep blue awnings. They usually spend the time there having coffee, especially during lazy Sunday mornings.

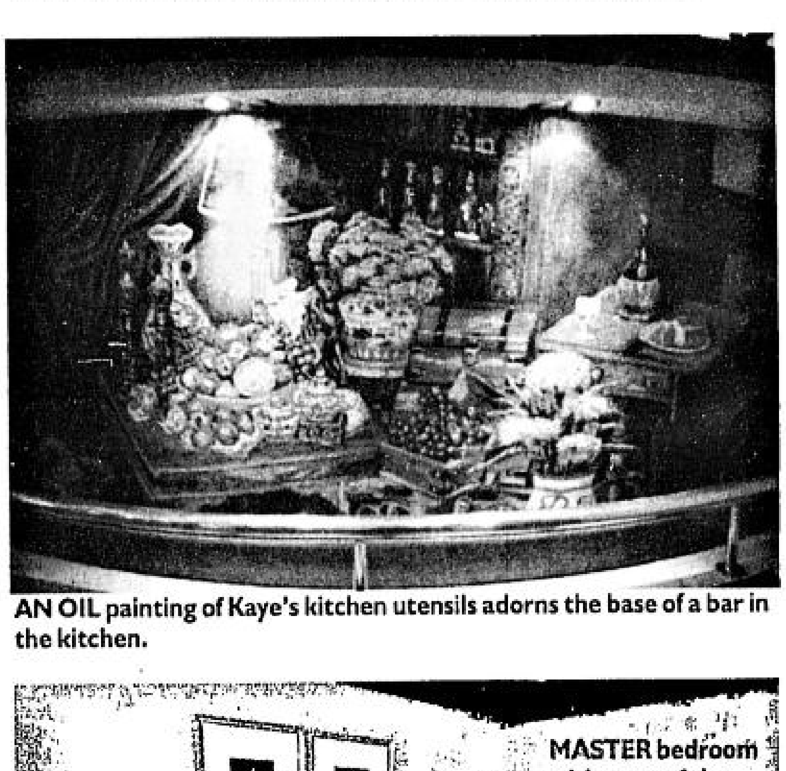
But this activity will have to wait until after July, as Kaye is on the family way. After three frisky boys, who, like their Atenista father, are crazy over basketball, the couple is praying for a baby girl.

"If you ask me," says Kaye, "I enjoy the comforts of the master bedroom. Our boys still hang out there most of the time."

It's a good thing their hotel of a home is now a thing of the past.

*E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph*

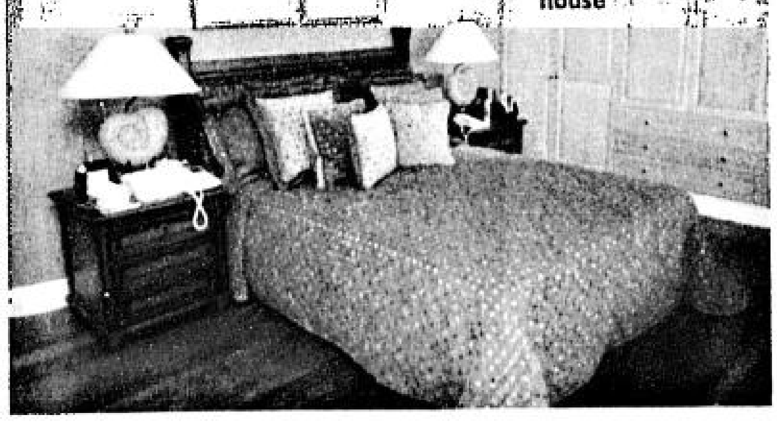
**THE LANAI** is the Gamboa couple's favorite spot in the house.



**AN OIL** painting of Kaye's kitchen utensils adorns the base of a bar in the kitchen.

**GLASS-TOPPED** dining table with a *banga* as base (huge clay jar) and potted plant as centerpiece

**THE GAMBOAS:** (seated) Jojo, Mark, and Kaye; Mike and Kevin



**MASTER** bedroom with none of the hotel feel of the old house

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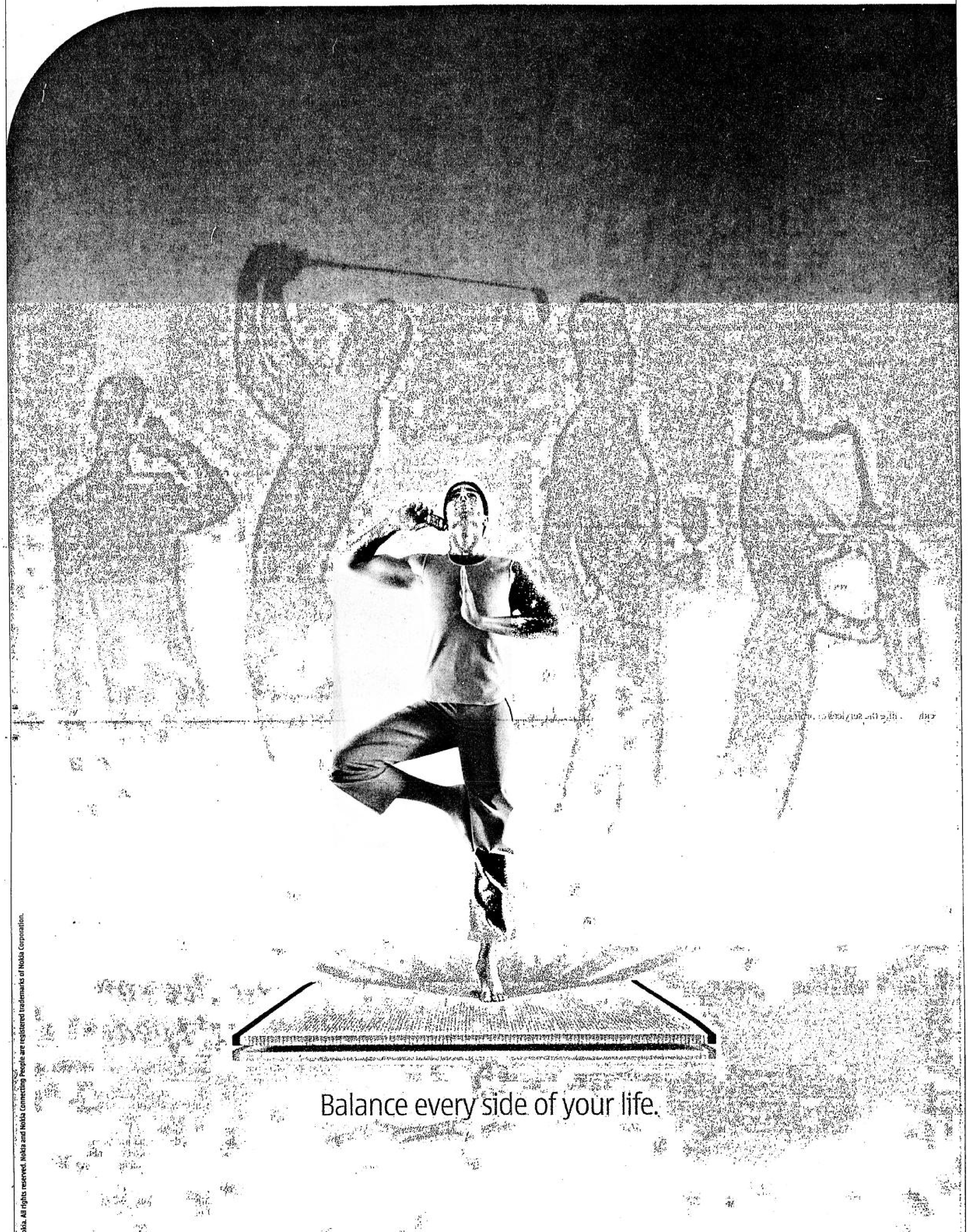
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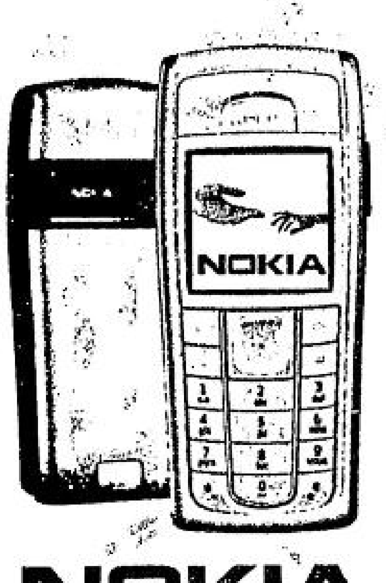

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# How green is a coal-fired power plant?

*Part 1*

**SEEING GREEN**

*Doris Gaskell Nuyda*

MIRANT Philippines has a coal-fired power plant in Pagbilao, Quezon, one of three the company operates in the country (the other two are in Sual, Pangasinan; and Toledo, Cebu). Its head office is in Atlanta, Georgia.

The company makes many claims about the operations of its Pagbilao station, operating since 1991 on a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) agreement with the National Power Corp., meant to boost the image of the company, and also to make assurances about the health of the environment and the people.

Among its claims is that Pagbilao is the largest power-generating plant in Southern Luzon and the safest in Asia, with very high standards of environmental compliance.

We listened to these and hoped all of it was true. We also got to find out first-hand during a visit to the Pagbilao plant. Our group, composed of Mirant president Edgardo A. Bautista; Allen Paul M. Flake, vice president for external affairs and business development; Leonarda Camacho, commissioner for science, technology and environment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) Philippines; and Bernie Lopez, journalist and teacher, were ferried to the plant site by helicopter, cutting travel time from five hours to less than one.

### Pleasant surprise

Not only were we spared heavy traffic, but we also had a bird's eye view of two of Southern Luzon's mountains—Makiling on one side, and Banahaw on the other. We were happy to note that, contrary to earlier information, both remained green, with no bald spots on their peaks.

We landed on Isla Grande, site of the station and its eco-destination area called the Carbon Sink Project. The island is on Tayabas Bay, just off Pagbilao proper, and is connected to the mainland by bridges built by Mirant itself to facilitate mobility of its 450 employees (many of whom live in or near Pagbilao) and visitors (students make frequent field trips here) who would otherwise have to travel by boat.

Our first stop is the plant building where we are shown a fully digital computer room with wall gauges to measure pressures of different kinds to reduce emissions to even lower than standards set.

Smoke quality is actually visible through a wall "window" that reveals the intensity of the fire in the boiler area. As we tour the plant, we are shown a complex of boilers, turbines and pipes going up and down the steel scaffoldings.

The plant premises are totally uncluttered, even a little bare, setting off colored bins lined up along a structure. These are segregated garbage awaiting disposal.

### Toxic waste disposal

There is also an area specified for hazardous and toxic waste which is collected, we learn, by a "treater" based in Cavite that has been certified by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Hospitals should take note of this because of the hazardous waste they generate that need proper and safe disposal.

As a coal-fired energy generator, Mirant imports its fuel from neighboring countries. Coal (2.5 million metric tons are used annually) is brought by ships and unloaded on a specified area.

Many of Mirant's environmental claims seem to start here. As a green company, says a brochure, it uses bituminous coal with low sulfur and ash content. There are also an advanced water spray system, highly efficient electrostatic precipitators, dust collectors, air monitoring stations, ash lagoons, sedimentation basins, waste water treatment plant, all designed to minimize environmental risk.

The burnt coal, incidentally, is not kept in the smoke stack or in drums where they can become ash and dust that could be blown off by the wind and inhaled and possibly cause illness. It is deposited in an ash pond and covered with plastic to prevent it from being blown away.

When the collection reaches a certain level, it is recovered and turned into fertilizer.

We thought we'd already been given a big dose of industrial environmental practices. But we had yet to see the Carbon Sink Project that company people seemed so excited about. "What's a carbon sink?" we asked. It's a mangrove reforestation project. Report on it coming up.

### Kite festival

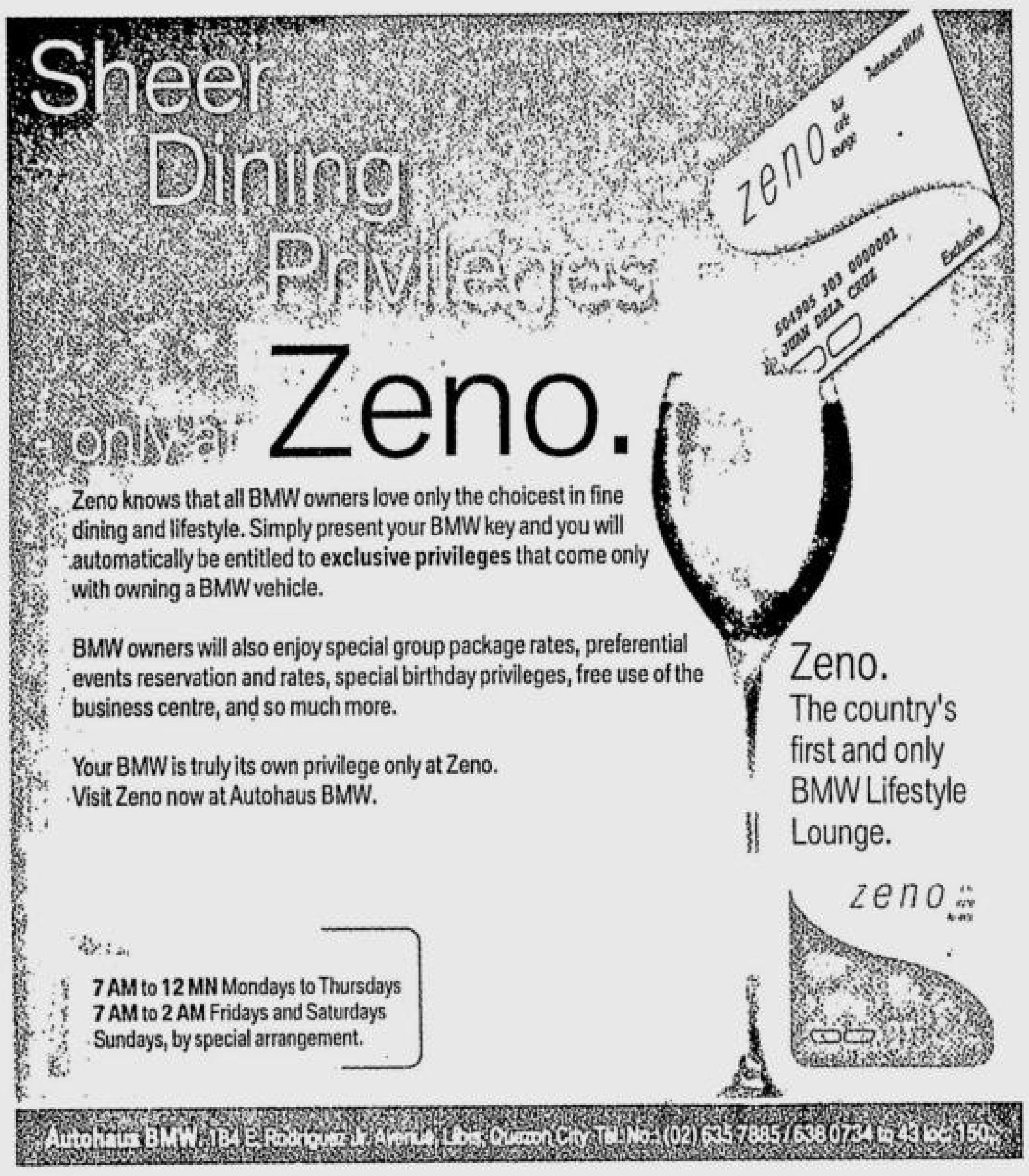
Tomorrow, April 17, Haribon Foundation holds a Bird Kite Festival to celebrate Earth Day (April 22) at the Bonifacio Global City, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. There will be contests in kite making and flying. Call 4364363 or 4333476.

### Replies to readers

To L.L. Lee: I got in touch with interior designer Johnny Hubilla concerning your plan to redo your roof to accommodate a garden. He needs additional details before he can tell you what must be done. So kindly call him at 7256750.

To Luz of Angeles City: I informed Narda Camacho, Linis Ganda executive vice president, about your need for more recycling information. Her representative from Linis Ganda will get in touch with you directly.

*E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com*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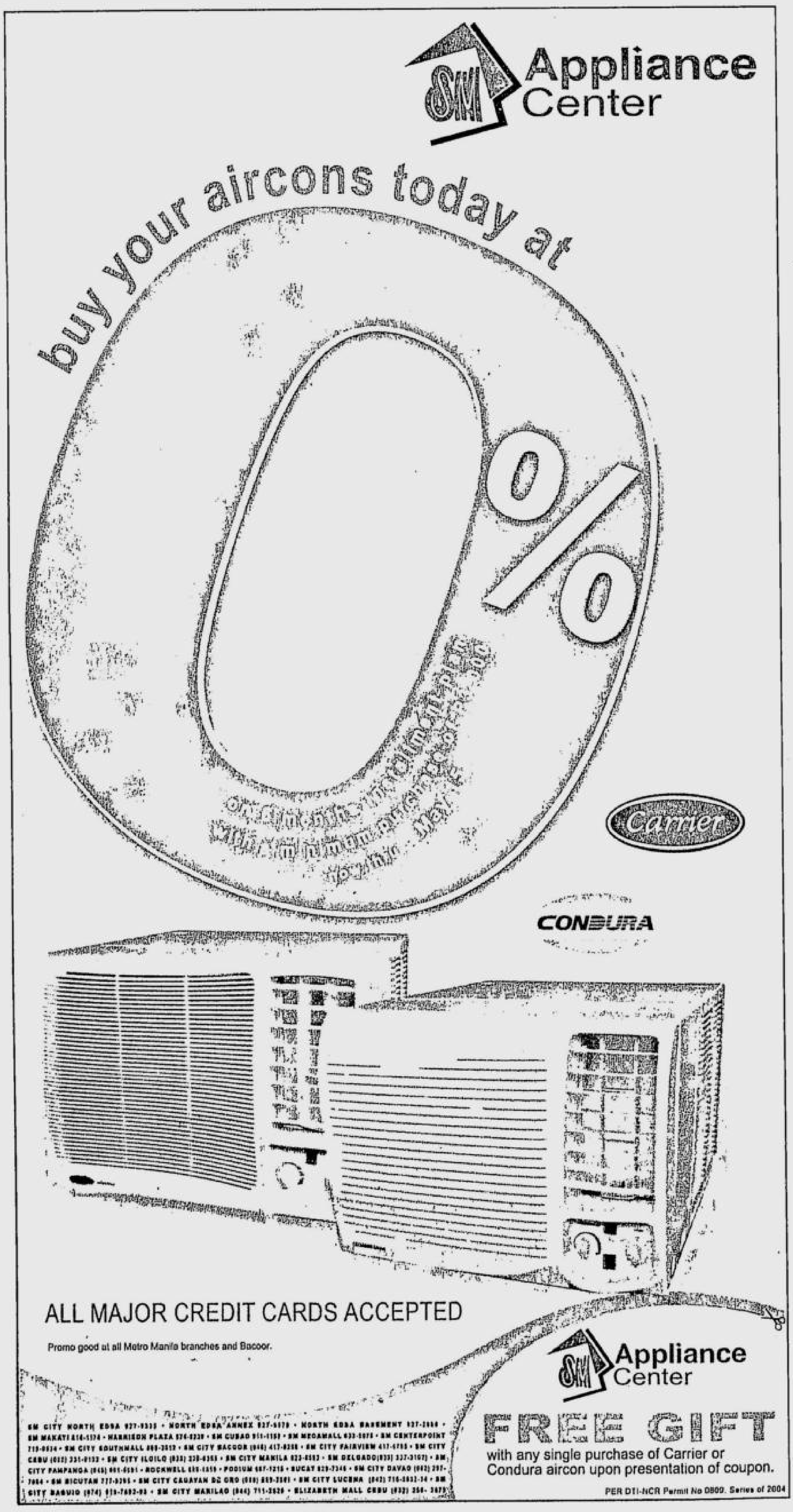
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Check out the ongoing Travel and Outdoors sale of Handyman Do it Best. Enjoy discounts on folding tables, barbecue grills, water stations and thermostats, among others. They also have hobby kits, lap trays, foot pump double barrels for bicycles and scooters, tire gauges and Lakbayan bags on sale.

You may also want to get multi-purpose pocket tools and durable metal bitters which can be used to hold keys, attach to your ropes to pull luggage and even tow along chests and packages.

For those who are staying home during the dry season, Handyman may have the things to help make the time productive. Check out the latest departments for auto parts and ceramic tiles at Robinsons Place Metroeast along Marcos Highway and Robinsons Place, Imus.

Visit Handyman Do it Best branches in all Robinsons malls, Waltermart outlets and other leading establishments nationwide.

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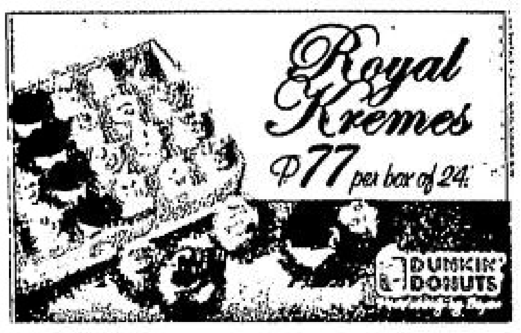
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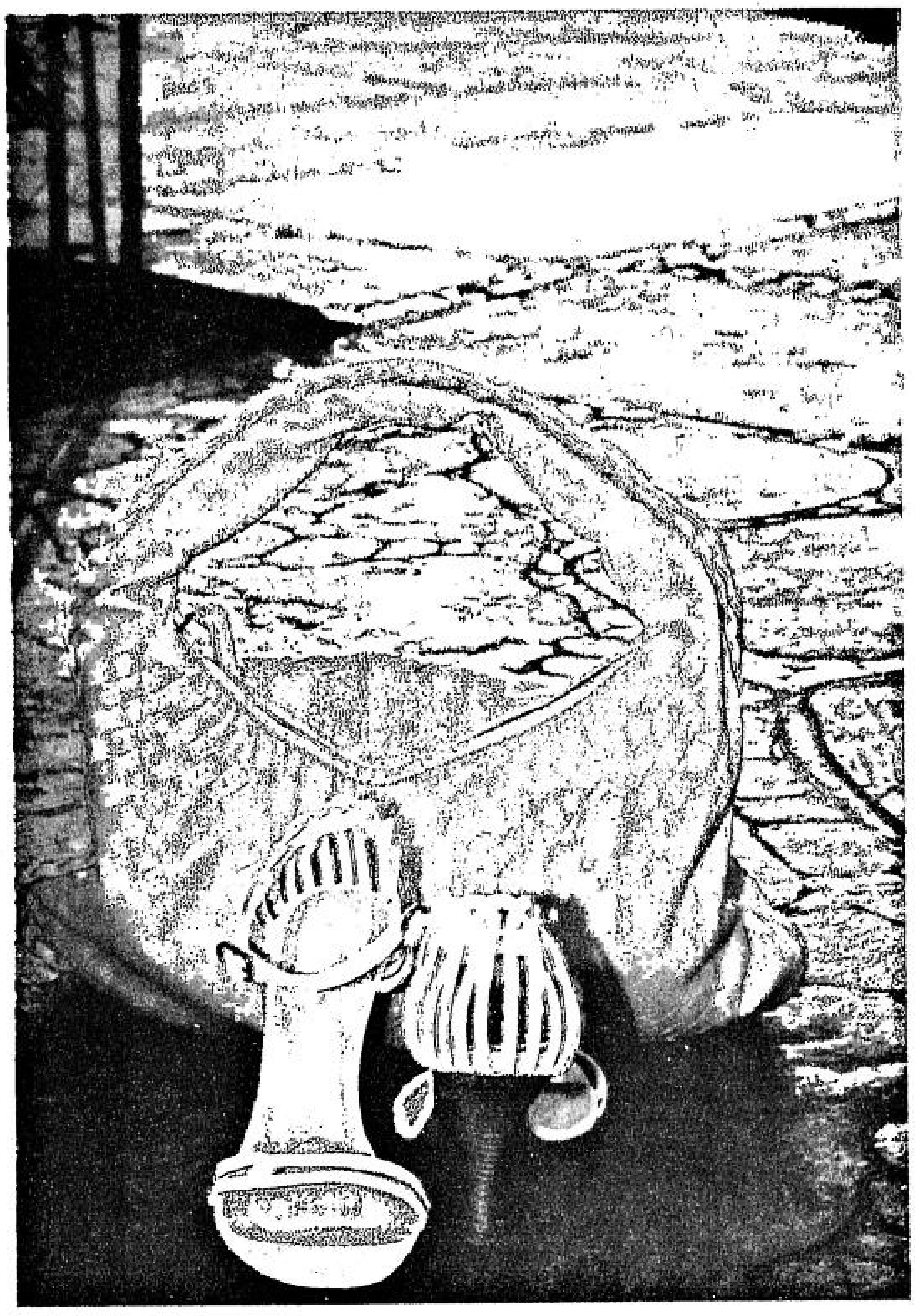

# High-voltage glamour

## This season, Store Specialists has the sexiest stuff to slip and sling on

PHOTOS BY
CHITO VECINA

HOBO bag in *calab* (P62,500) and ladies' sandals in white (P32,500)

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APRIL 16 FRIDAY

# Flashes of brilliance

LADIES' bag "shop" (P34,500) and ladies' sling sandals in *nat* (P29,500)

THE BOTTEGA Veneta Spring 2004 collection explores the softened, luminous beauty of a beach.

It features flashes of bright colors—turquoise, coral, yellow—gentled by neutral tints. Materials are opulent and invite people to touch them: nappa, *cervo*, glove calf, cashmere suede, ostrich, crocodile and, new this season, soft goatskins.

Curvilinear shapes, collapsing volumes and rounded lines predominate.

The organic feel is amplified by a palette of sand and white with accents of bright *cassata* (pistachio green), *calabria* (limpid blue green), warm *corallo* and yellow sole.

Surfaces are either gently matte, looking lightly dusted with sand, or gleaming like the sun on the sea.

New variations on Bottega Veneta's signature *intrecciato* include suede woven with tulle or silk chiffon. Also,

FLASHES/ H2

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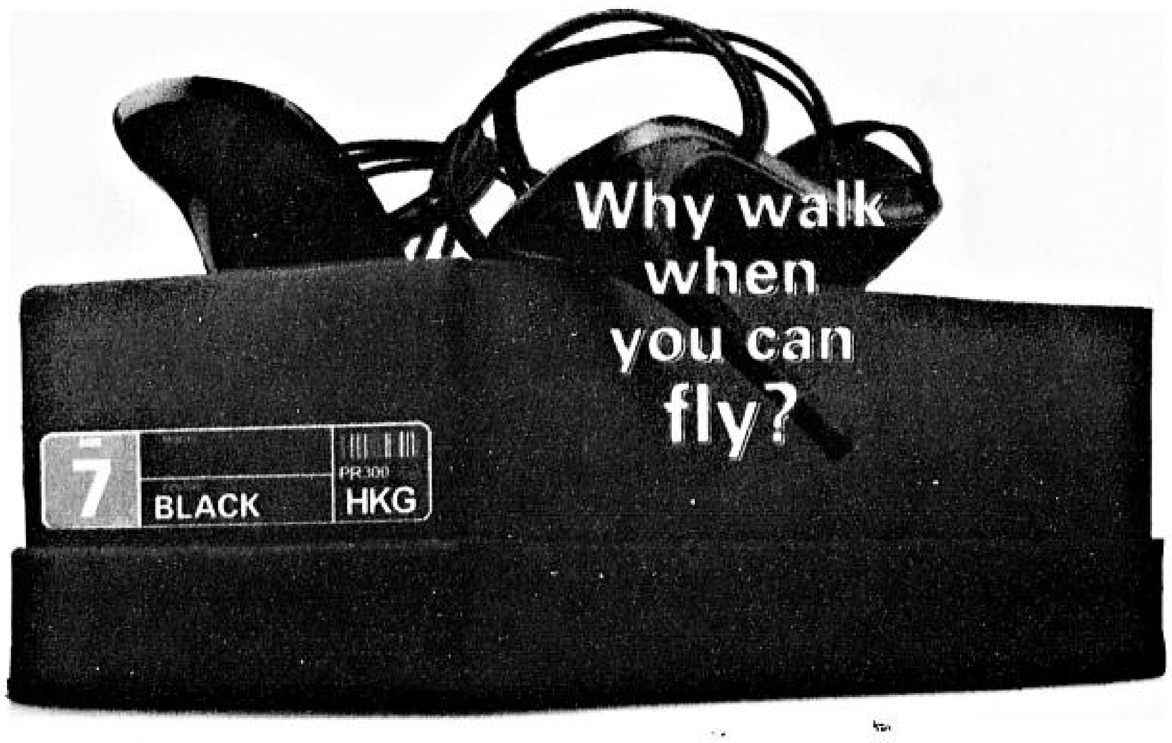

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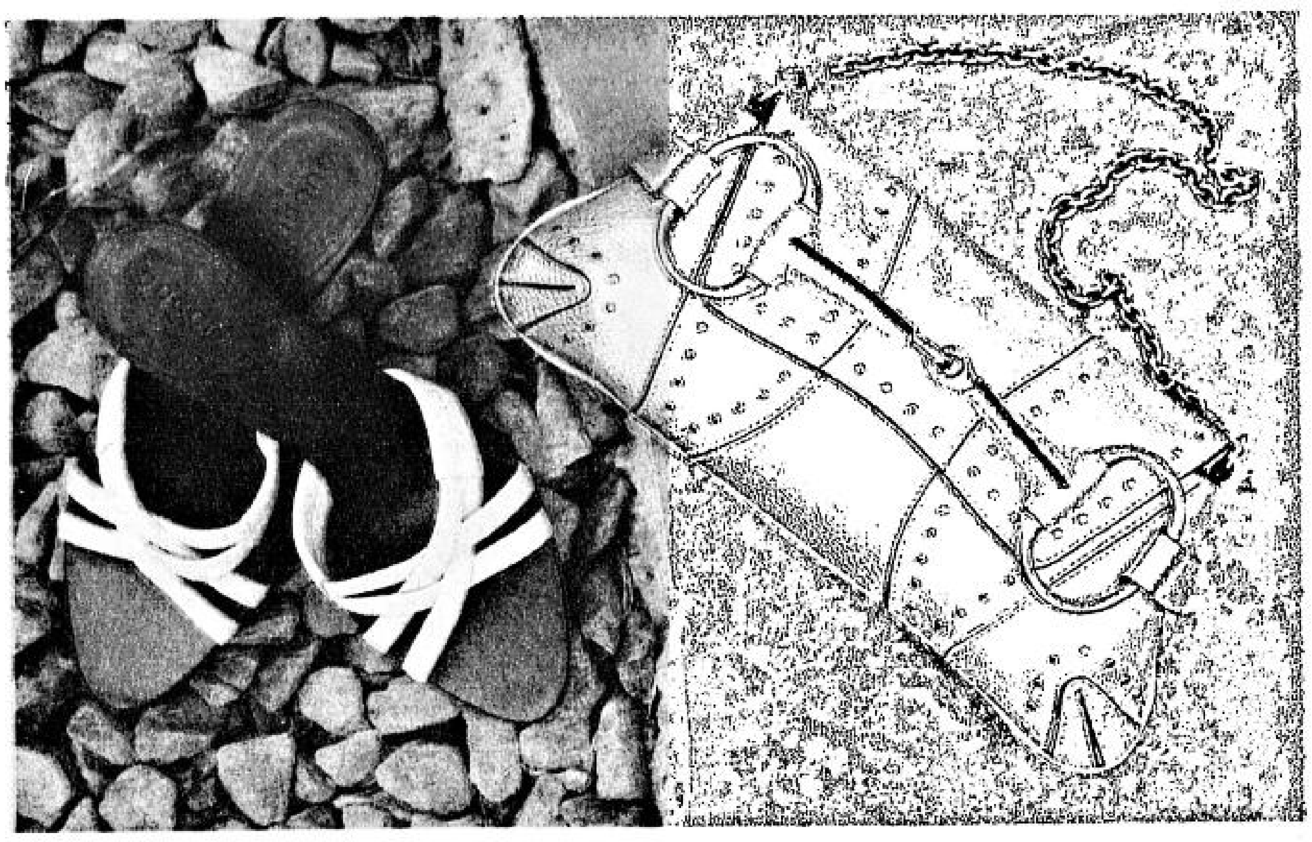
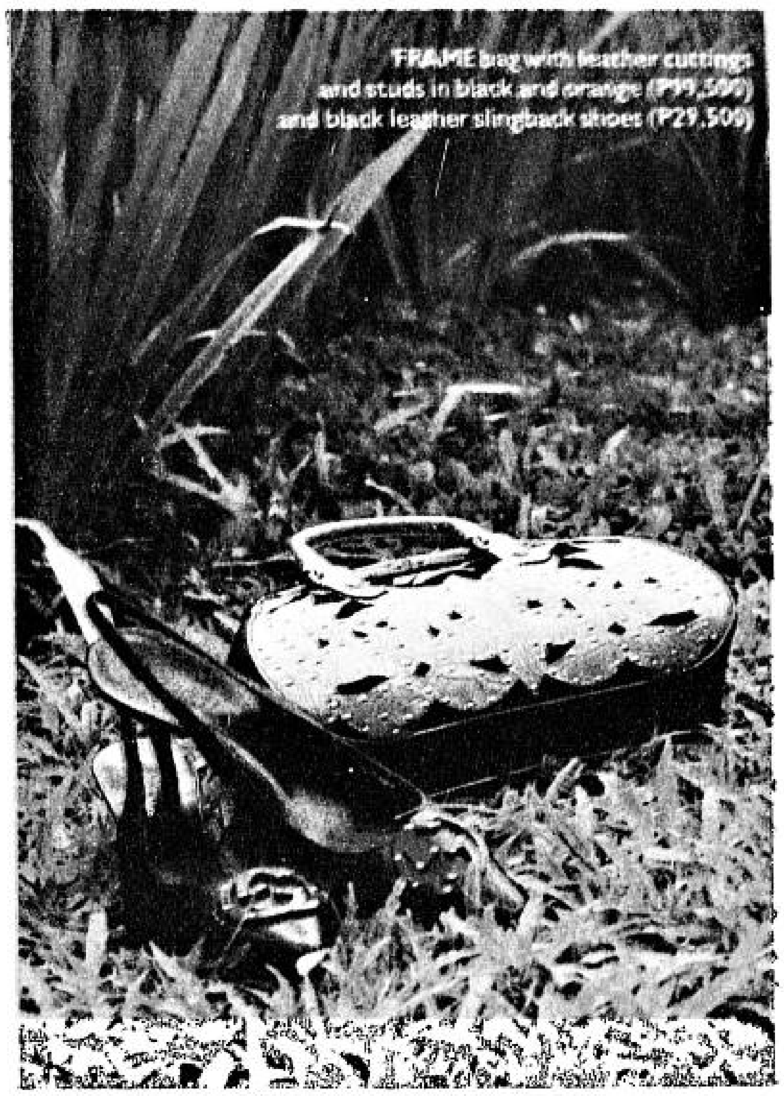


**MINI** flap bag in yellow gold leather with horsebits (P72,500) and brown slide with white straps (P22,500)



**FRAME** bag with leather cuttings and studs in black and orange (P99,500) and black leather slingback shoes (P29,500)

**DUCHESS** Ottagono flat s
(P20,900) and bag (P35,80

# Almost jewelry

**MINI** handbag with bamboo handle in sea green (P46,500) and small wallet with bamboo in sea green (P16,500)

**CUT-OUT** b
and fabric

THE GUCCI woman in Spring/Summer 2004 is chic and very contemporary in Eye Candy.

The half-day and half-evening collection continues last season's contemporary elegance but in a lighter more colorful way. It also has a romantic quality.

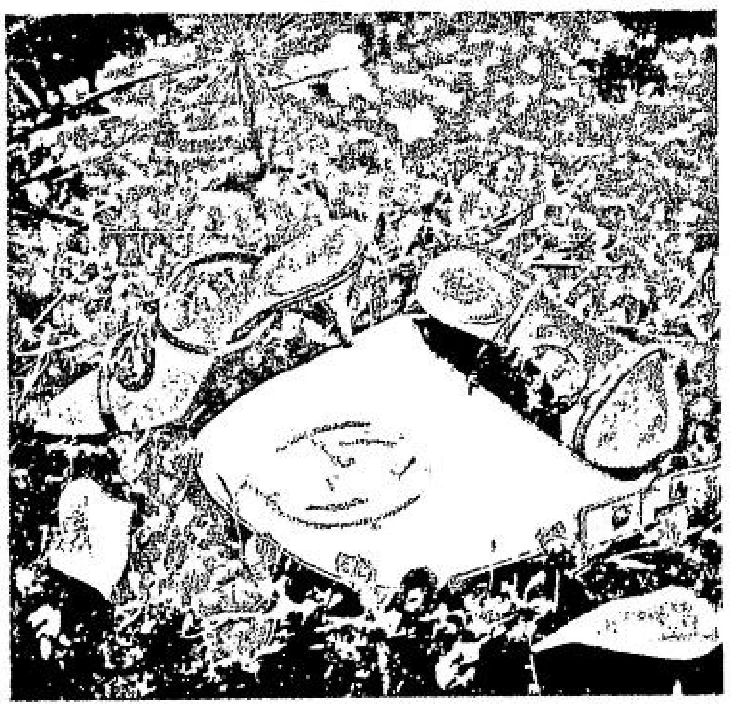
Eye Candy best describes the season's palette of bright yellow, soft lavender, bright blue, sugary pink, aqua, pale pink and orange. There are lots of gold, white, beige and nude as well.

Almost every outfit is in silk—washed, stretched, matte or shiny. There are jersey, silk twill, silk organza, silk crepe, silk satin and silk chiffon, as well as soft nappa and lightweight suede. Skin, like croco, is used a lot as seen on a gold jacket, as well as on handbags and shoes. Swarovski crystals adorn dresses or used on a whole dress or a whole handbag.

Bags in the collection are almost jewelry. The closure on some bags is snake-like, lacquered and enameled with jewels. Some classic Gucci ideas like the stripe have been reintroduced in bright pink and black, yellow and black, bright green and black, purple and black, and sometimes in crocodile, or in satin. GGs come in the shape of a snake, enameled with stones.

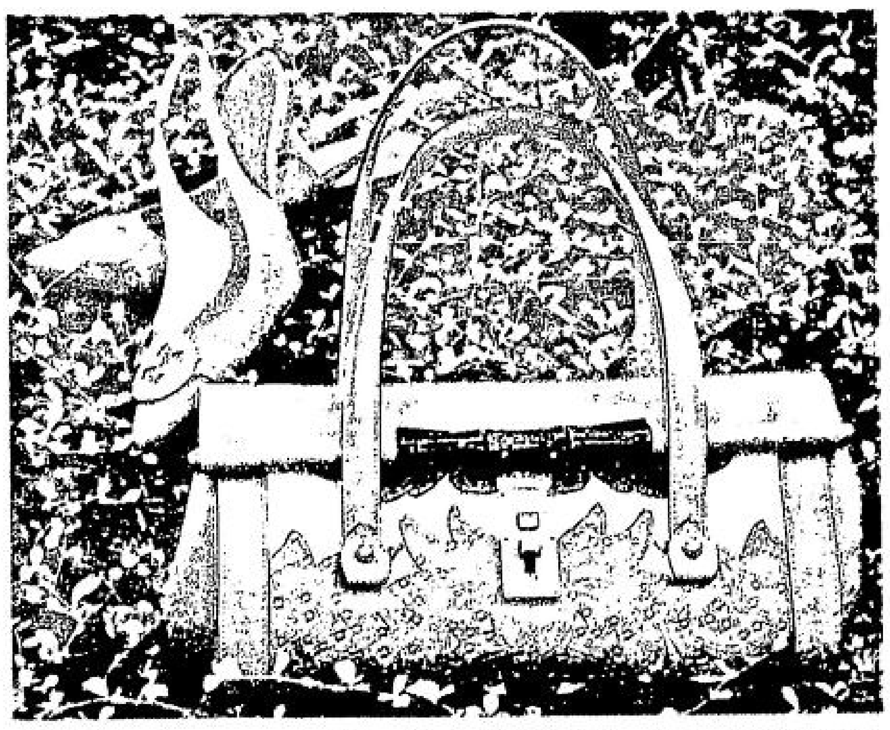
Shoes have very high heels, curved and turn into a pink gold bamboo half-way down the heel. The style is very thin and elegant. For day, there are some low shoes and also knee-high canvas boots with low heels. All shoe soles have gold metal.

Gucci is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Greenbelt 4.

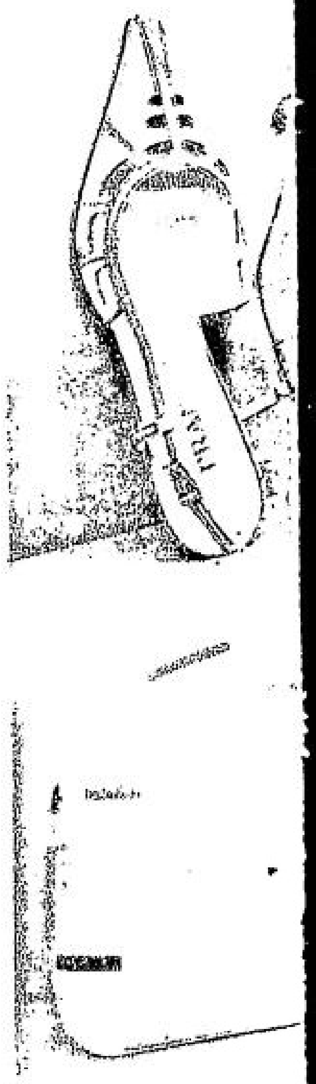


**WHITE** handbag with GG logo (P34,500) and blondie slide in turquoise (P24,500)

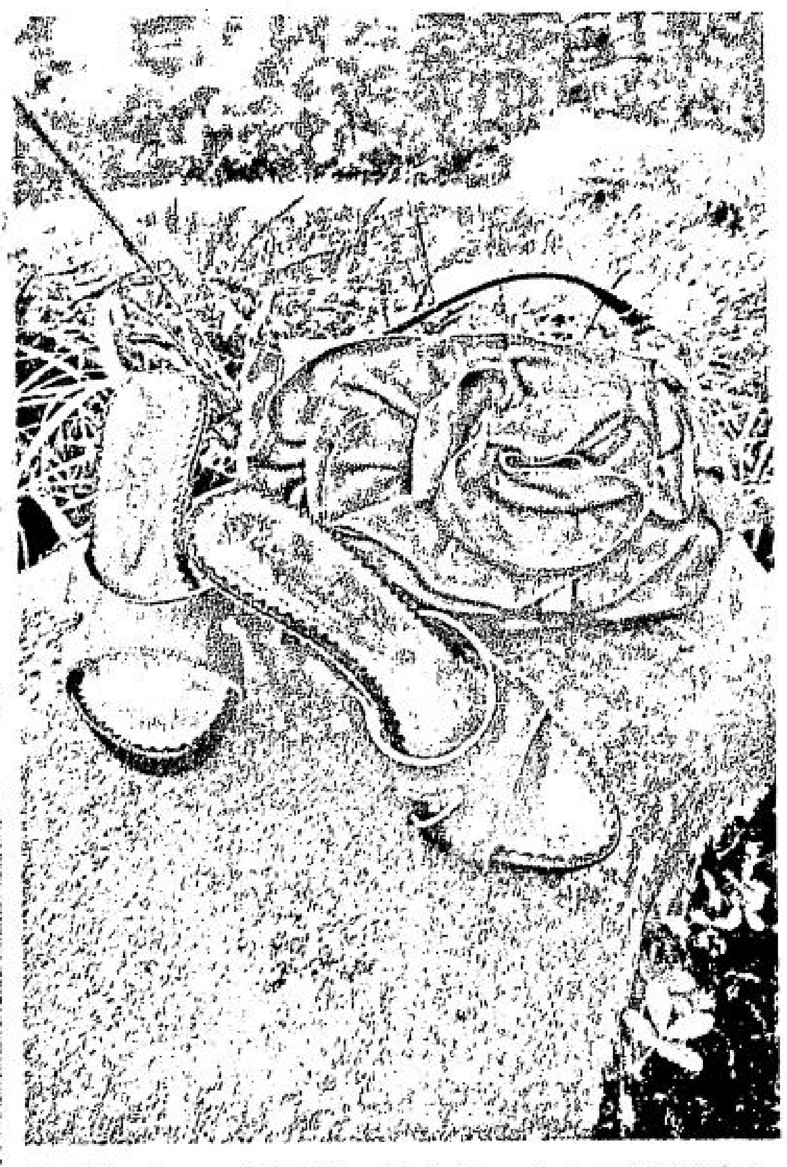
**HOBO** bag in fabric with piston closure in beige (P39,500) and beige slide in monogram (P19,500)



**BULLET** bag in orange and white with studs (P99,000) and leather slingback in beige (P29,500)



**PRADA** sport black-and-v
and sport white-fabric sho



**NADJA** bag in *paon* (P42,500) and Lola slip-ons in *paon* (P17,500)

**CASSANDRA** tote in *cuolo* (P27,500) and Cassandra slip-ons in *cuolo* (P19,500)

## Functional art to

**ST. TROPEZ** in light powder ruffle leather (P34,500) and multi-color Daria slip-ons (P26,500)

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# Globe-trotting fashion

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IF travel isn't in your shopping list this summer, maybe Prada's new collection will change your mind.

Old-world postcard prints are the hallmarks of the collection, in bags, belts and shoes, headscarves, gathered skirts, trench coats, pleated dresses, open-front blouses, masculine shirts and swimsuits.

Prada takes us to hippie central Morocco with rope and leather sandals, silk headscarves, dresses, jackets, cardigans, skirts and evening dresses.

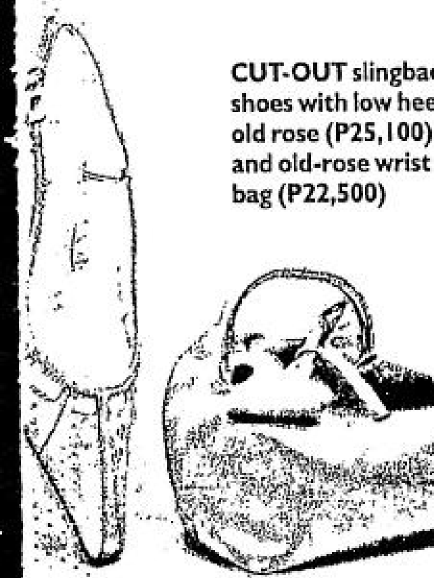
Out of Africa comes African Madras prints, raffia accessories, summer tweeds, and lots of luxurious reamer. Python- and crocodile-skin cover jewel-decked clutches, sophisticated slips and lavishly light coats.

India is revisited in saris and golden dresses fit for a maharaja's queen.

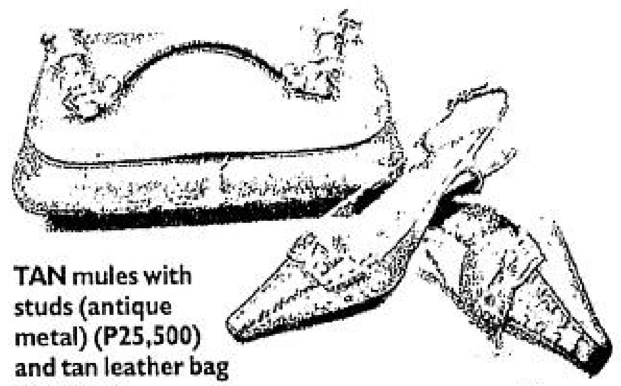
From orientalia to overcoats, tie-dye to tune dresses, sari to capri, trust to make sure that travel isn't only in fashion, it is fashion.

In the Philippines, Stores Specialists Inc. is the exclusive franchise holder of Prada. The Prada boutique is located at Rustan's Makati and Greenbelt 4. Apart bags and shoes, it also offers women's ready-to-wear clothes and accessories.

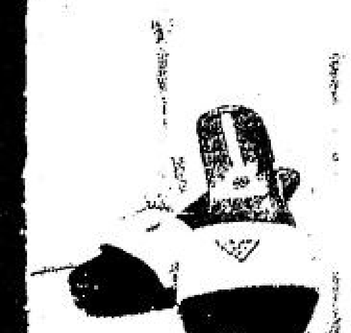
ack pumps with medium heel (P22,500)
-and-leather black handbag (P28,800)



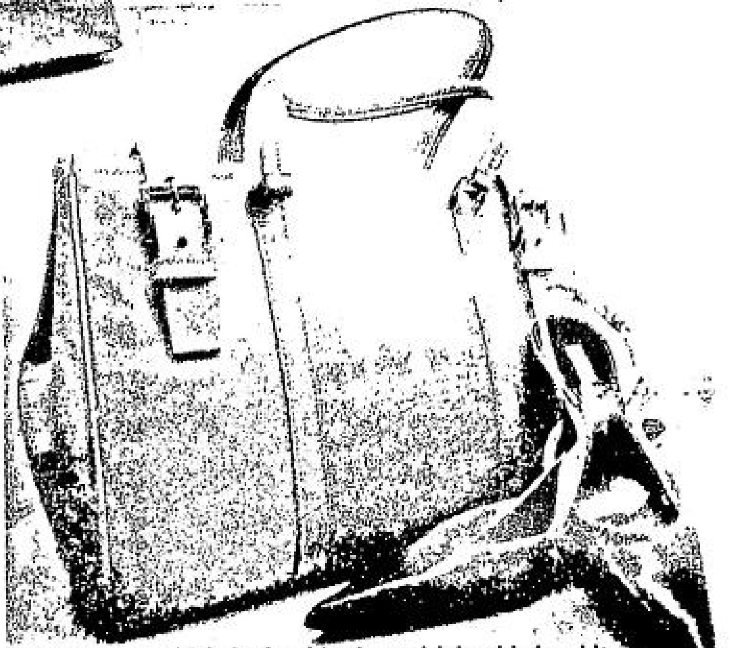
**CUT-OUT** slingback shoes with low heels, old rose (P25,100) and old-rose wrist bag (P22,500)



**TAN** mules with studs (antique metal) (P25,500) and tan leather bag (P59,200)



hite sandals (P15,200)
ulder bag (P16,400)



**LEATHER** and fabric shoulder bag with buckle in white and camel (P43,600) and camel and tan shoes (P47,300)

# have and to hold

YVES Saint Laurent welcomes spring/summer with hand bags inspired by '20s fashion, Art Deco and sheer passion of women to have pieces of ctional art.

The St. Tropez line boasts of remarkable tures, varied colors, and functionality. It s ruffle details and an architectural feel inred by early 18th-century Deco.

Mala Mala, inspired by the Mombasa style, antelope horn handle. Mamounia follows the footsteps of its predecessor, the Nadja bag, with a softness of construction. The Yves Saint Laurent engraved piercing and the Deco feel make this line unique and remarkable.

Denims dominate the Kahala collection. Totes with the Yves Saint Laurent Cassandra logo in velvet appliqué make a feminine yet bold statement.

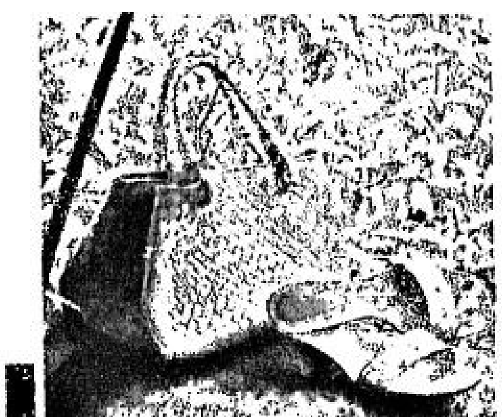
Yves Saint Laurent, which is now open at Greenbelt 4, is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc.

HALA tote in nicotine color (P22,500)
d Lola slip-ons in *matone* (P16,500)

**MALA MALA** with antelope Horu in black (P70,500) and Lola black sandals (P18,500)

**KYOTO** bag in *blanco* (P59,500) and ladies shoes in *nero* (P29,500)

**TOTL** bag in volcano (P42,500) and flat shoes in nero (P27,500)



**TOP** handle ladies' bag (P59,500) and ladies' sandal (P29,500)

# Flashes of brilliance

From page H1

goatskin intertwined with metal chains.

Limited edition bags showcase the beauty of artisanal craftsmanship: a goatskin bag etched in gold mosaic, "cascade" bag of nappa woven like ripples of water at the sand's edge. The newest frame: a pumpkin-shaped hand bag embroidered with gold filigree.

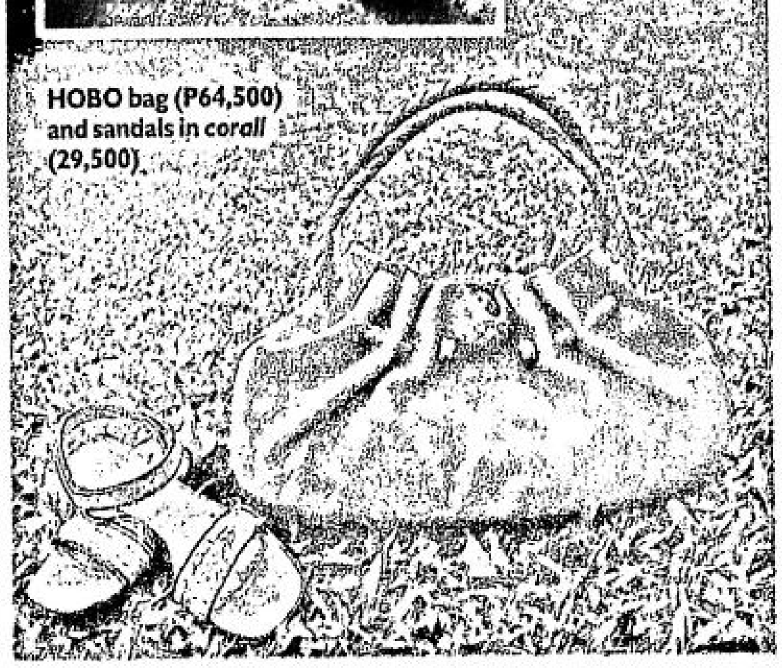
Spring shoes are designed around an arched heel. This season there is always a heel, whether tiny or high—with a rounded toe.

The stylized look has a profile as curvaceous as a Jean Arp sculpture.

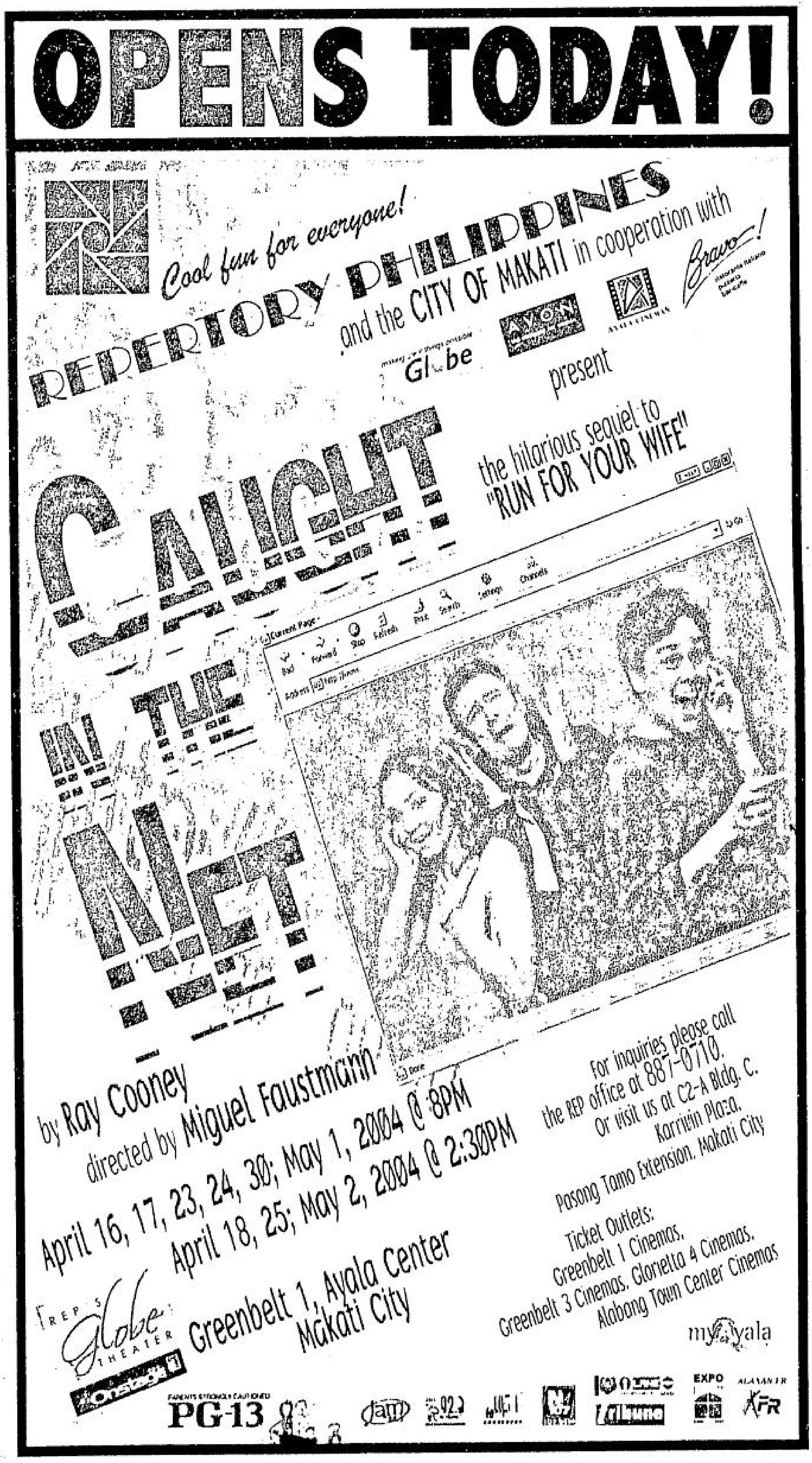
Sandals are dazzling in metallic hues, crocodile, hand-painted python or covered with multicolored Murano glass beads.

Completing the collection is a handful of sporty, signature pieces in silk jersey, glove leather, cashmere suede, and cotton.

Bottega Veneta is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Greenbelt 4.



**HOBO** bag (P64,500) and sandals in *corall* (29,500)



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# Exciting new choices for the season

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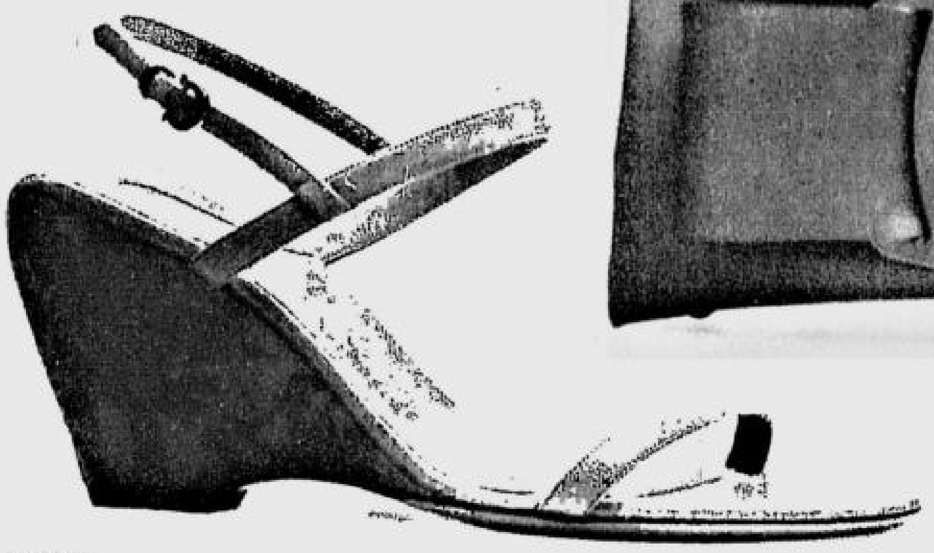
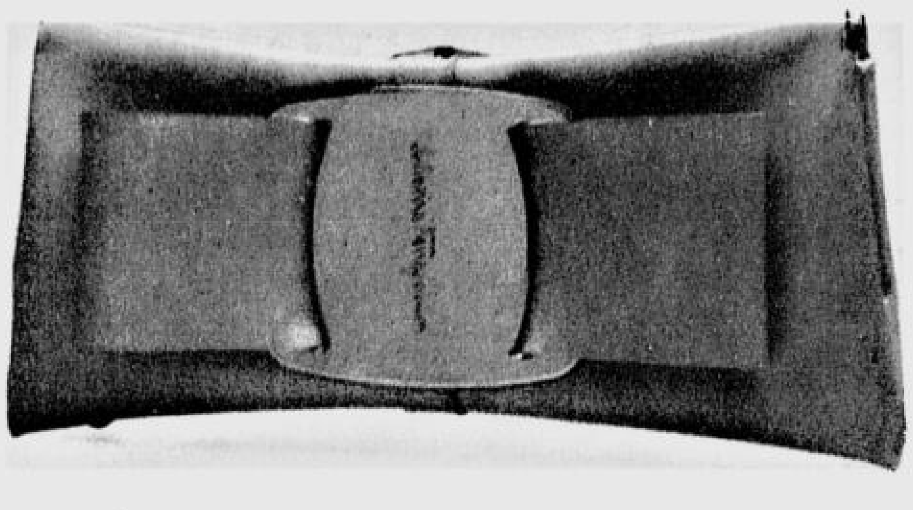

**FLORAL**


**VARA** bow bag

## An old favorite returns in living color

SALVATORRE Ferragamo's handbag collection for the season offers exciting new choices.

One of its most recognizable icons, the Vara bow bag returns with fresh new colors and gold-dusted suedes. New must-haves are over-sized oval bags while the traditional satchel bags get a fresh look in new colors, belt-stitched detailing and bolder new signature *gancio* hardware in opaque gold.

Elegant oversized envelope pochettes come in dégradé and white patent. Nautical patchwork makes envelope bags graceful. A large floral laser-cut envelope with stitched leather flowers is elegant and stylish.

Meanwhile, Vara shoes acquire new allure in classic ballerina flats or chic slides in exquisite colors. They include gold-flecked suedes and exquisitely fresh patent leathers. The new Vara bows are transformed into transparent PVC or patent leather, from the usual grosgrain, and topped with a new opaque gold *gancio* buckle.

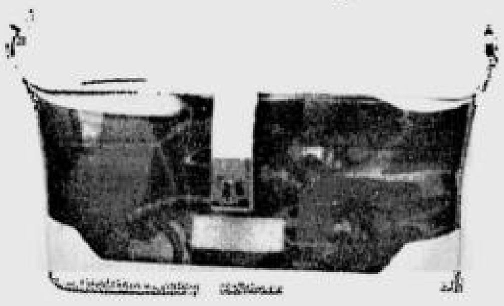
Slim high-heeled pumps in suede have a lurex look while court shoes with transparent plastic uppers seem weightless. Also a standout are leather and canvas sport pumps with double stitching on the back of the heel.

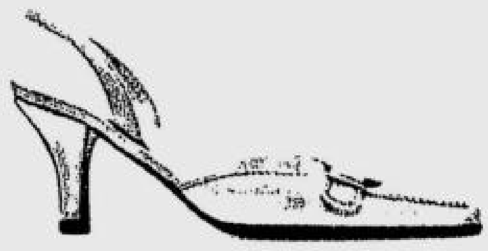
The Audrey, with its signature shell heel, is transformed into an even lighter flat with the stitched *gancio* cutout.

Ferragamo is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Greenbelt 4.

**FLAVOUR**

**ENVELOPE** bag




**LUA**

**TRADITIONAL** satchel bag

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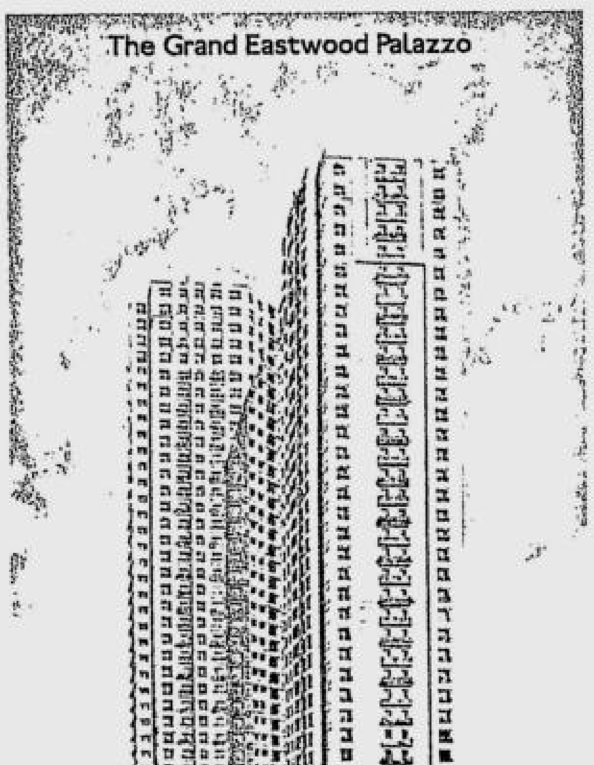

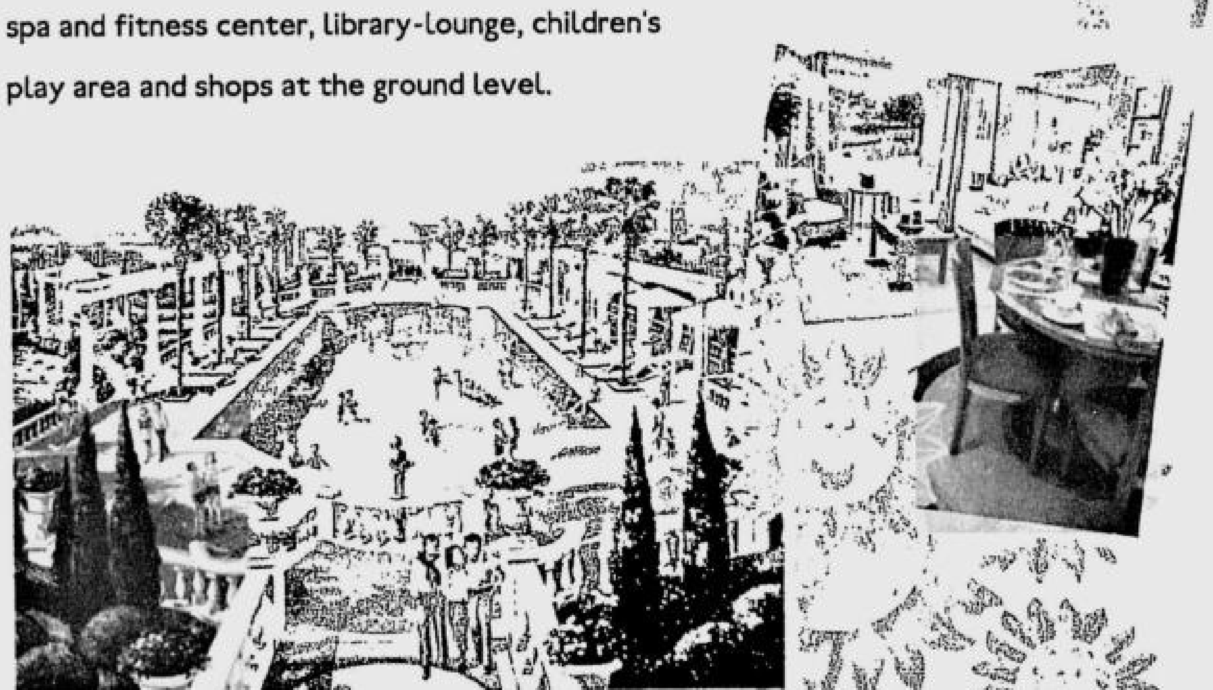

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